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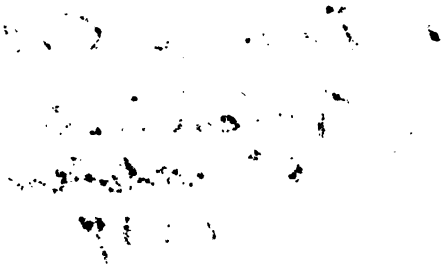

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE OF MRS. SUMBEL,

LATE

WELLS;

Of the Theatres-royal, Drury-lane, Covent-garden, and Haymarket.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

INCLUDING

HER CORRESPONDENCE WITH MAJOR TOPHAM,
MR. REYNOLDS THE DRAMATIST,
&c. &c. &c.

VOL. II.

"..... My soul abhors
The man, who breaks through Nature's sweetest laws;
Whose heart so callous to each tender tie,
So deaf to gratitude, to pity's sigh,
Can see that form he vilely has betray'd
Now pine in want, and never lend his aid.
Alas! much-injur'd, ..., gen'rous WELLS,
How oft on thee my thought with sorrow dwells!
Accept a tear---'t is all I can bestow---
That, and to hate the author of thy woe."
Vide ANTHONY PASQUIN'S "*Pin-basket.*"

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MEMOIRS AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MRS. SUMBEL.

Now commenced a scene of embarrassments, as new as they were perplexing. I changed one of my guineas, and proceeded towards Lincoln, where I endeavoured to take some rest, with the flattering dream that my anxieties would speedily be alleviated: but, alas! it was not a *golden* dream; for I found that warm professions may spring from cold and unfeeling bosoms. Happy would it be for me had this been the

only instance in which I had experienced the duplicity of pretended friendship! But as this short tour will present a sufficient number of calamities, I shall not take a retrospect of past inquietudes, but proceed.

After paying for my supper and lodgings, my finances presented no means of travelling as the wife of a noble Moor: I therefore thought it most advisable, as well as most rational, to take my seat in one of those cumbrous flying vehicles, called a stage-coach. Fortunately, there were two other passengers besides myself; whose presence secured me from a repetition of charioteering insolence. I had only four shillings to pay there, and eight

for the two following stages, till I arrived at the ferry, where I found that I had eight shillings more to pay; and at the same moment, to my inexpressible chagrin, recollected that I had not one remaining. Here, of course, I expected to receive letters, with a remittance: moments appeared like ages while I continued in this state of mortifying suspense. The tide seemed to conspire with my ill fortune, and the waves flowed as tardily as the fountain of humanity in the heart of my illustrious husband.

Previous to our embarkation, I informed my stage-coach companions of my awkward situation. One of them kindly proffered his services, and pro-

posed paying my share of the day's expenses, amounting to about eleven shillings. I promised to return this sum as soon as I had crossed the Humber. At the ferry I was advised to go to the Cross-keys inn; but, to oblige the friendly traveller's wife, I agreed to go to the NEPTUNE; and happier would it have been for me had I paid a visit to the sea-god in the deepest cavern of old Ocean!

It is the custom of innkeepers in this part of the country to visit the opposite shore, to take a survey of the passengers. I know not how it is, but this circumstance reminds me of the wild coasters, who fly to a wreck with the humane hope of a profitable plun-

der. Here I was, for the first time on my journey, recognised as Mrs. Wells.

The name of "mine hostess" of the Neptune happened to be WINTER; —and a *harder* winter I never remember to have met with! I observed symptoms of commiseration interchanged in the looks and uplifted eyes of the lady who was a passenger in the ferry-boat and the *northern* hostess. Would to Heaven we had been

"Far as the *poles* asunder!"

The lady politely addressed me, by expressing her fears that I was cold. I informed her that, not expecting to pass the water so late in the evening, I had left my great-coat behind me.

"You have been on a visit in Lincolnshire?" said the lady.

"Yes, madam; I have just left Doctor Willis's, and expect my husband to follow me."

This undisguised reply only tended to augment the consternation; and I cannot but confess that my appearance naturally served to confirm their conjectures: I wore a muslin gown, *without any cloak;* and the perturbation of my mind was strongly visible in every feature of my countenance. Anxiety on account of receiving no remittance, hope mingled with fear while I looked forward to my journey, and the dear objects who occasioned my undertaking it, perplexed my mind, and

preyed upon my feelings. I was now *really* almost frantic!

The instant I arrived I requested the host with the freezing name to pay my obliging fellow-traveller the eleven shillings which I owed him: he complied. I told the lady and her husband I should proceed to the Wolds that night. The landlord informed me that he had no chaise ready; but that in an hour I should be accommodated with one. The lady, concluding that I should immediately continue my journey, took her leave and departed.

After supper I found my spirits extremely depressed— my fortitude was nearly exhausted; yet Hope presented a faint gleam of the long-looked-for

golden ray which my husband might have directed towards me. Alas! no such enlivening prospect came that night; and I resolved on resting at the Neptune, with an intention of continuing my route at five in the morning. The chaise was ordered; and my vexations I knew would prevent my oversleeping that period.

I rose soon after the sun, which did not shed its lustre on a being more unhappy! When mine host of the Neptune presented his bill, I thought I should have fainted; and blest should I have been at that moment to have exclaimed with Isabella—

"My death will pay ye all!"

I now hesitatingly enquired whether

I might be permitted to send the money back by the driver, or whether the host would take my watch as a security for his bill. I wished rather to have been indulged with credit, and to have parted with my watch nearer to the Wolds; but the wary provident man greedily grasped at my last treasure; and the *tablet of time* will never fail to record the transaction.

The avidity with which he snatched at my watch disgusted my feelings, and awakened my indignation. I blushed for his indelicacy more than for my own vexations; and, with a sudden impulse of resentment, I darted from the carriage-door, informing him, at the same time, that I should take a chaise

from the Cross-keys, and immediately redeem my watch from his possession.

He now followed me along the street; begged, for God's sake, that I would return, for I must pay for the chaise, the horses being put to it. I refused to hear him. He now begged my pardon; and, to my extreme astonishment, informed me that his wife had received a letter for me. My joy was indescribable.

On our return to the Neptune, I eagerly enquired after my letter, concluding that it came from my husband with the long-looked-for remittance. I was shewn into the bar. The hostess was yet sleeping. My solicitude was torturing. I repeatedly demanded my let-

ter, and was informed that the host was walking in the street, but that his wife would rise speedily. To the street I hastened, and again conjured the man to give me my letter. I represented the anxious state of my mind—my wish to proceed on my journey; but to no effect. The mysterious paper was still invisible. There seemed a combination to distract me.

I now repaired to the house of a Mr. Tedman, a person whom I had known some years before. I begged Mrs. Tedman's permission to remain with her till I could receive my letter: but I grew every instant more impatient, and therefore waited on the traveller who had recommended me to the

Neptune, and requested that he would demand it. He readily acquiesced; but no letter could be produced.

I now went to Mr. Sykes (mayor of Hull), and desired him to investigate the mystery: but, strange to relate, upon minute enquiry, he discovered that *no letter had arrived!* and that this artful stratagem was put in practice merely to prevent my exposing the conduct of the host. The consternation and the indignation which followed may easily be conceived. The host was severely reprimanded, my watch restored to me, the bill paid, and a chaise ordered from the Cross-keys;—Mr. Tedman having procured money, by leaving my watch as a security, as

I did not choose to owe any obligations to strangers.

I next arrived at Great Driffield, where, the moment I was recognised as the late Mrs. Wells, I experienced every civility from the innkeeper. He informed me that I had been long expected at the Wolds, that he had seen my daughters lately, and that they were in perfect health. I could not help silently feeling, that COWSLIP was *herself again!*

Within one mile of the romantic abode of my infant graces, I stopped at a small house, bearing a sign with this inscription—"*The Cottage Inn.*" My full heart bounded with anticipated joys, which I hoped to experience in

the sweet embraces of my three darling children. The good woman flew to open the gate: I enquired, "Are the young ladies well at the cottage?" The woman gazed at me for a moment, clasped her hands in ecstacy, and, with a voice of feeling exultation, cried aloud—"O God, you are *the mother!*" She could utter no more; but leaned against the gate-post, breathless and astonished.

She soon informed me that I had been long expected. She also said that my mother was well, and unremitting in her care of my darlings. I had scarcely voice to answer; but I thanked her with my tears—those eloquent heralds of the grateful and overflowing heart.

Onward we went with rapidity; the servants flew to greet me;—I was nearly overpowered. The first object I beheld was my dear eldest daughter: like a sylph or wood-nymph, I saw her lightly tripping from the granary, bearing a sieve of corn, like a young and blooming Ceres. The little sportswoman, the huntress of the Wolds, was deeply absorbed in her favourite task: when her eye caught the chaise entering the lawn, she screamed—"Our mother!—our mother!" In a moment I was surrounded by such objects as the feeling heart will readily picture. The parent's bosom will sympathise in the dear delights which my pen cannot delineate: my mother embraced me, my children

hung about me, and I had six little arms at one moment encircling my neck. But how shall I describe their looks when I told them, that on the following morning *I must depart!* Such was the stern command of my imperious husband!

I had so implicitly obeyed his orders, that I had never taken off my gown during the journey: my arms were swollen immoderately, and very painful; but I recollected the words of the immortal bard—

"Where the mind's free, the body's delicate;"

and, in the anxiety of my heart, it had no throb for corporeal suffering.

The father of my children paid his

respect to me soon after my arrival: the natural ease and polish of his manners made me feel myself at ease. We passed an evening of pure and rational delight: and, when the family retired to rest, I had the supreme gratification of watching my three darlings as they slept upon their pillows. Oh! how trivial are the world's enjoyments, when compared with such sweet moments!

On the following morning I was requested by my mother to prolong my visit another day: my fatigue, and my desire to pass a few hours more in the society of my children, being evident, the father of my daughters not only wished me to remain another twelve

hours at the cottage, but also permitted the two youngest to accompany me as far as Stamford, in order to present them to my husband, and to prevail on him also to make a visit at the Wolds.

I regarded this confidence as the most fortunate event that could happen. But my feelings were again put to a new trial; for, conscious that I wanted the needful passport—money—and yet too proud to borrow from the father of my children, I knew not how to proceed on my journey. On his saying he supposed I had a letter of credit, I answered "Yes;" for I could not bend my lofty spirit to ask a pecu-

niary favour, while I felt that I was the wife of a man worth nearly half a million.

The chaise that took me to the Wolds carried me back to Beverley: my ruminations during the interval may easily be imagined. Severe was the struggle between pride and maternal affection: I looked with the tenderest delight on my children, at the same moment that my heart beat with alarm while I anticipated new humiliations, which would seem doubly poignant, because *they* would probably share them.

At Beverley, where we were well known, we found a stage-coach just

setting out for York. The innkeeper enquired whether the young ladies would dislike such a mode of travelling; but a gentleman who was a friend of the family being a passenger, we all agreed to proceed together. At York, we put up at Batty's; I ordered dinner, and wrote again to the Moor, strongly urging the necessity of sending me money; informing him that I was on my journey, with two of my daughters, and could not advance without a remittance. The dear girls dined merrily; and it was well they did, for they were destined to fast much longer than was their usual custom. After dinner, they asked me whether we should pro-

ceed immediately; I informed them that I should wait for letters from my husband: they said nothing further.

I now made enquiries after Mr. Wilkinson, the manager of the York theatre—a person whom I had known many years, and at one period in my professional character—expecting to receive every mark of respect. I was not disappointed; for I considered Mr. Wilkinson as a man of understanding and good manners.

He seemed delighted to see me, and my charming girls: he was polite even to obsequiousness. He informed me that he was going to Leeds on the opening of his theatre that evening, and he hoped I would not be displeased

at his offering me and my daughters orders for the night's entertainment. The children naturally looked a joyful assent to this proposal: they wished above all things to go, and I had not resolution to refuse them. I enquired at Batty's how we might speedily reach Leeds; and I found that a stage-coach was that moment setting off. I therefore arranged my dress as well as I could, and, leaving my bonnet at the inn, as I could not enter a side-box with it, we set out; the little companions of my expedition as gay as a tranquil mind could make them, and myself as sad as an unquiet one could render me.

We arrived at Leeds. The coach

stopped at the Golden Lion. The hostess enquired whether we would have tea, or any other refreshment. I declined the proposal; and, without delay, hastened to the theatre. There I received a message from the Golden *Lioness*, enquiring whether I would have a chaise back to Tadcaster. I replied that I had been recommended to the Old King's-arms: but she urged her suit so zealously that I could not refuse her, and a chaise was accordingly ordered. When the chaise came to the door of the theatre, I begged the postboy to go and ask the favour of his mistress to lend me a bonnet or handkerchief to tie round my head—for I was not very well, and, so dressed, extreme-

ly cold. The postillion replied, that his mistress "had no such thing." I was rather disconcerted by his abrupt answer; when a Mr. Williams, a gentleman belonging to the company, politely offered me a silk handkerchief, which I accepted, and promised to return it by the postboy.

We set off, and arrived at Tadcaster. I desired the driver to go to an inn which I well knew, but which did not happen to be his favourite house. He insisted on going to another on the hill, because the family where I wished to put up were fast asleep. This unlucky event considerably disconcerted me, because I was known at one house and not at the other.

I now ordered another chaise on to Batty's, informing the first post-boy that I should send the money back by the second: he replied, that 'this would not do, as I had no luggage.' I then requested to see the landlord: 'he was gone to rest, and could not be disturbed.' I desired the new post-boy to come to me; and offered him five shillings as a present for himself, in case he would pay the other who drove me from Leeds: this he refused.

I then ordered supper, for the children were faint and fatigued. The driver at the inn represented that they had nothing for me to eat. The first postillion now entered the room, and, in an insolent tone, informed me that

he would not go without the money. This new mortification nearly distracted me: the sweet girls were cold and hungry. I was too much overpowered to make any comments, but ordered the postillion to refresh his horses, and I would return to Leeds with him: he obeyed. I then asked for a glass of water;—'there were no glasses out!' I asked for a crust of bread;—'there was none in the house!' Thus we sate an hour, watching one glimmering candle, when my daughters came running from the passage, to tell me that the larder was 'full of nice things.' This discovery was made by the light of a lamp; and, on my not complying with their wish—for they were faint with hunger—

they first enquired, "Mother, have you no money?" All their silver had been expended in turnpikes; and they now requested that I would change a note, supposing that, if I had no gold, I of course possessed bank-paper.—Poor innocents! they little knew my situation.

The driver now informed us that the chaise was at the door. My children took their seats; and I, with my silk handkerchief round my aching head, accompanied them. The postillion being his own master, and consequently the master of our movements, stopped with a friend at a public-house, to feast and regale, while we sat at the door

shivering and half famished. I requested my daughters to take a nap, but they were much more inclined to take a breakfast. Though I can now laugh at these events, at the time of their occurring my heart throbbed with anguish.

At seven o'clock we again reached the habitation of the Golden *Lioness*: we were ushered by the post-boy (the Sir Clement Cottrel of the scene) into the kitchen. My children were half dead for want of rest; we therefore desired that the chambermaid might be called to prepare our beds: but, alas! as soon as the driver informed her that 'the lady had not paid him,' her ready

and nimble alacrity became suddenly palsied, while she briefly replied, that 'all the beds were engaged.'

I now entered a little dirty parlour, where I requested her to light a fire: she said 'the chimney smoked.' By this time the waiter had risen; and, unsummoned, came to take a view of the "way-worn travellers!" I ordered breakfast—it did not appear; I rung the bell repeatedly—nobody came: at last my daughter went out to enquire the cause of such neglect, when the waiter questioned her, who and what we were. His impertinent curiosity roused my resentment; and I demanded to know his reason for asking questions which did not concern him. He

replied, that he 'should ask a few more before he had done.' I now left the children's handkerchiefs and that which I had borrowed, with a new silk parasol, on the table; and, with my daughters, set out on foot for the Old King's-arms, where I ordered breakfast, and wrote to Mr. Wilkinson. Here I was once more tranquil, and treated with that marked respect which my children's appearance demanded; but unfortunately, in a few minutes, the driver from the Golden Lion rather abruptly made his visit, demanding, with more eagerness than civility, the payment of his money. I desired him not to discompose his spirits; informing him, at the same time, that I had left more than the

value of the sum I owed him at the inn, on the table. I also said that I had written to Mr. Wilkinson, whose answer I momentarily expected: but many hours elapsed, and no answer came! I sent again, and again. He had caught the contagious indifference to my vexations, and was gone to the theatre!

I think it proper to mention the large sum I wished to borrow—it amounted to just TWO GUINEAS! My pride was less mortified than roused by his silence: I therefore repaired on foot, without a hat, to the theatre, to explain the singularity of my situation. The first person I met was Mr. Knight, brother-in-law to the late Miss Farren.

Mr. Knight was then performing in Mr. Wilkinson's company; and had really entertained me by his dramatic efforts on the preceding evening.

Mr. Knight informed me that Mr. Wilkinson was not at the theatre: I, without reserve, acquainted him with my awkward embarrassment. He said it was 'a pity I had no hat on;' and generously *treated* the children with a pennyworth of nuts! Such liberality ought to be recorded, as it may prove a noble example to some of his relations. I believe it was the first time during the lives of these elegant girls that they were ever *so treated!* Had Mr. Knight been the husband of a woman of birth and education, I should probably have

experienced a more polished reception: but, alas!.....I shall make no comment.

I returned to the inn. During my absence the room had been engaged; and, to add to my sorrow, the bill was presented, amounting to eight shillings. They begged that I would send it back from York, at the same time informing me that the mail-coach would set out in about an hour from another inn. Thither I went, and found that it had more than that period of time departed.

It was now eight o'clock in the evening, and we had not taken any refreshment since breakfast: it began to rain: I was obliged to walk without any co-

vering on my head, and my patience was exhausted. Anticipating another night of sorrows, I knew not what to do. I now sought the abode of a respectable person, and a brother-magistrate of my children's father. He was not at home. I then hastened to the shop of an apothecary, of the name of Newsome;—a gentleman who I hope will pardon my recording his generous conduct, though the philanthropy of his heart repaid itself by its own action. I informed him who I was, and unfolded all my sad story of vexatious adventures. I should not have found courage for this disclosure, had not despair awakened all my feelings for the safety of my children—for I have always, unfortunately

for my own interest, proved that zeal in the cause of others which for myself I never should have exerted.

I requested Mr. Newsome to inform me where I might rest that night. He replied, with a modest and benevolent smile, 'that I should nowhere be more safe than in his house;' at the same time gazing with admiration on my sweet girls; who, in their turn, were busily occupied in contemplating a large fruit-pie, which at that moment appeared more desirable than all other objects in the universe. Their eager longing was soon satisfied, and they enjoyed their meal with more than Epicurean avidity. I could not eat, for my heart was full of joy and sensibility while I reflected

on Mr. Newsome's kind and liberal treatment; and I felt its value doubly, by contrasting it with that of others whom I had recently encountered.

It was the unvarying custom of my little darlings to say their prayers previous to their taking repose. They appeared to breathe more than their usual ardour on this occasion: their voices seemed to rise in grateful strains to the Father of Heaven, for their escape from persecution springing from low and vulgar natures.—Such may they never meet again in their journey through existence!

In the morning we were summoned by the housekeeper to breakfast; while at the same time she presented me a

letter. In consequence of my having mentioned, on the preceding night, the sum I wished to borrow of Mr. Wilkinson, I found it inclosed, with an offer of as much more as I might find necessary for my journey. This note I should have here inserted, but that I have confided it, as a treasure which records the liberality of Mr. Newsome's heart, to the *noble* Moor, my husband!

I now sent the eight shillings which I owed for my breakfast at the inn. The first person who met my daughter was the insolent chambermaid, who with an inquisitive tone, accompanied by a sneer of triumph, enquired where we had slept. My daughter paid the book-keeper, and presented two shillings to a

little stable-boy. The cause of this remembrance must not pass unnoticed, though before I omitted to mention it. On the evening when we had been refused beds, and disappointed of our places in the mail-coach, this little son of nature, observing our dilemma, with a sigh exclaimed, "It is a pity the ladies cannot have a bed!" A tear, worth all the gems that grace a diadem, accompanied the words; and, while sensibility is alive in my bosom, I never shall forget them.

My little girls hastened to me, and, with a flush of conscious delight, informed me of what they had done.—"We gave him a shilling each," said they: "you will not, you cannot be

angry!" I kissed them, and blessed their grateful hearts; for they were animated by the genuine spring of liberal feeling.

I had not words to thank the philanthropic being who had proved the cause of the termination of our sorrows. Such actions will not fail to find more, much more, than MORTAL RETRIBUTION.

I next purchased a sixteen-penny paper hat, and thought myself the happiest of human beings. I walked to an hotel which I had not seen before; but they had unfortunately heard of my unlucky situation, by the appellation of 'the lady without money.' I ordered a chaise. They believed that 'theirs were all engaged.'—"What, *all!*" said

I, as I took some money out of my pocket—the sight of which proved its electric power; and the man who had recently answered my question with a negative, brightening his countenance as if it caught the reflection of my gold, exclaimed, "God bless me, I did not see before! we *have* a chaise." The joy which glistened in his eyes so dazzled them that he forgot his feet, and absolutely fell prostrate over the shafts of the carriage; to the infinite entertainment of the spectators, and particularly of my little fellow-travellers, who, for the first moment in their lives, witnessed the potent influence of that poison—GOLD!

We proceeded to Tadcaster, and from thence to York.

On our arrival at York, we heard that the story of our dilemma had reached that place before us: our supper, though spoiled by delay, was to be paid for; and a new scene of vexations menaced our progress. I sent to the post-office to know whether any letters were waiting for me, as I now expected, almost to a certainty, to receive the long-looked-for remittance from my husband. On finding myself disappointed, the bill was presented for the supper which we were not present to partake of. I now enquired whether the father of my children usually put up at that inn. I was informed that he always used the York-tavern. Thither I repaired, and instantly informed the master of the

house who I was; upon which he ordered a chaise, evinced every mark of respect, and, as soon as we had dined, we set out for Malton. There we slept, and on the following morning proceeded to the fairy palace of the Wolds.

The astonishment which every one expressed at seeing us could only be equalled by the pleasure I experienced on receiving a letter from my husband, which should have been sent to York, but by mistake had been forwarded to the Wolds. In this letter the Moor desired my mother to advance me any sum I might require for the expenses of my journey back to him. He also requested that my mother and children would make him a visit, as his health

would not permit him to wait on the father of my daughters; to whom he apologised for not meeting him at the cottage.

My mother, my youngest daughter, and myself, again set out for Stamford to meet my husband, to whom the former was to be presented for the first time since our marriage. I confess that I considered this project as an affair of some danger; for the gentleness of my mother's nature would but ill accord with the temper of the "fiery Tibalt," whose caprices were as changeable and uncertain as the winds and waves that wafted him from the Barbarian climes—or, more properly speaking, from the shores of Barbary. Still we proceeded

on our expedition; my mind perpetually agitated by hopes and fears, which all the comforts of our journey could not obliterate; for, though the perspective was gay and cheering, I could not help fancying that I beheld my sable genius at the termination of it.

On our arrival at Stamford, we alighted at the George; where, with a voice half trembling, half assured, I enquired after my noble helpmate. I found that he had amused himself in giving splendid dinners, which gratified his zest for ostentation; though his *illustrious* consort was scouring the country round with no consolation but the hopes of maternal feeling, and no credit notwithstanding the high consequence

of the Turkish traveller. It is true he had desired me to *draw* on him; but as I feared that it might *draw* on me more misfortunes than riches, more contempt than credit, I thought it advisable to with*draw* from a scene so doubtful, lest those whom I encountered might *draw* conclusions not of the most satisfactory nature.

Though we arrived at ten o'clock at night, I was obliged to dispatch a messenger to Dr. Willis's, to inform the Moor that I awaited his pleasure, with my mother and youngest daughter. My husband was in bed when my message reached him; but he kindly con*descended* to write an answer, requesting our company to breakfast. The

idea of such a visit to such a personage, and in such a situation, terrified my mother so that I could not persuade her to obey the summons. All that this amiable woman had read of in the pages of fiction, or seen on the dramatic boards, rushed across her startled imagination; and the image of the turbaned sultan presented such horrors as made her forget the felicity of so illustrious an alliance.

Firm in her determination not to encounter the splendid assemblage of turbans, sabres, gems, and robes of eastern fashion, even the assurance which I gave her of Doctor Willis's urbanity and worth could not draw her one step towards the walls of Guilford; till I,

who knew the danger of encountering the Turk, was obliged to relinquish my persuasions.

My mother now enquired for my husband's lodgings. We sent a request to see Mrs. O'Connor, the lady of the house: she came and informed us, that ever since my absence my husband had resided either at the inn or at Doctor Willis's. She, however, offered us every accommodation; and my mother felt far more easy in her mind than she would have been at the place to which I proposed taking her. She did not know the virtues and philanthropy of that *mental guardian*, who unites the benignity of a feeling heart with the

strong magic of an enlightened understanding.

Soon after breakfast my husband, accompanied by a noble lord, who was then his particular friend, made us a visit to welcome our arrival. Had I travelled from the commencement of my eventful tour with all the pomp of an eastern princess, the Moor could not have greeted me with an air of more conscious dignity: but, unluckily, I could not help recollecting the scenes through which I had travelled—the Humber passage-boat, the insolent coachman, the surly postillion, with the *hard Winter*, and the untractable Golden *Lioness!*

My husband's animated features instantly convinced me that he had recently indulged in his propensity to splendid decoration; and I found that he had not only exhibited his Moorish paraphernalia, but that he had, in imitation of the Russian PAUL or the British HOWARD, illumined the dungeons of captivity with his dazzling presence. However I applaud benevolence, and idolise the effusions of the feeling heart, I cannot but condemn that empty ostentation which glitters on the stranger's path, while *kindred* bosoms are absorbed in the gloomy ruminations of despair and sorrow.

My husband renewed my solicitations for my mother to visit Doctor

Willis, but in vain. He then accompanied my daughter and myself, on horseback, to Burleigh, the magnificent mansion of the Earl of Exeter, and conducted himself with so much good humour and propriety, that he really appeared amiable, to the astonishment of our domestic attendant. This happy vein of complacency continued the whole morning, till he recollected that he was not adorned in the habit of his country. This never-failing *bitter* in our matrimonial cup had often proved nearly fatal; and the pearl which Cleopatra is said to have dissolved in her acid beverage, was little less expensive than the dress of my exalted sultan.

In the evening we amused ourselves

at cards; my mother being much more satisfied and composed than I feared she would be in the society of her new son-in-law. On the following day I gave an almost unpardonable offense to my husband, by taking a walk in the garden with my daughter, unattended by my usual *lords in waiting*; of whose humble occupation in the streets of the metropolis I have already sketched a brief description. The Moor, with a tone of voice more abrupt than dutiful, demanded, "Where is my wife?"

"In the garden, walking with her daughter!" replied my mother.

"How dares she walk without my leave?" said he:—"Why did *you* not go with her?"

"Because she has many years learnt to walk alone!"

His mildness now vanished like the sun-beams before a storm. The thunder of his voice and the lightning of his eyes spread dismay almost instantaneously. I had been accustomed to buffet with the tempest, and, like a hardy tree, to bear its violence: it is true I had often been obliged to bend, but he had never yet subdued me. This was not the case with the tender blossom who now, for the first time, encountered a breathing hurricane, which, like the breath of Boreas, bore down all resistance.

On my daughter expressing her alarm, the whirlwind of resentment

somewhat subsided, till at length it settled into a calm, which I knew to be of a transient nature.

On the following day he again proposed an excursion. We called on a lady at West Deeping, who, being a friend of mine, received us kindly. We staid to dinner; but unfortunately, after our repast, a gentleman entered the room, and, bowing to me, said he was 'happy to see me well.'

Naturally might my husband be astonished at any person's seeing me *well*; but that a stranger should feel happy, and that I should be the cause of his felicity, was criminal even beyond bearing. I, who had seldom seen people *happy* in his society, was pleased

to hear the comment; but my smile augmented the offense, and the carriage was abruptly ordered to convey me from the scene of *peril!*

The epilogue to this serious drama was *a bill*, which our servant presented for the horses' feeding. The decencies of well-bred society were now forgotten, and the language of the *noble* Moor bore a strong resemblance to *ignoble* manners.

The next adventure of the day was produced by our meeting a poor shepherd on our journey back to Stamford. The honest fellow bowed as he passed me. My husband called to him, and demanded — "How long have you known my wife?"

The shepherd, rather surprised at the question, hesitatingly, and with simple honesty, replied—"About five years ago madam was on a visit here."

"I'll sell her to you for twopence!" vociferated my husband. The shepherd looked aghast—my daughter burst into tears, and begged the groom to take her back to her grandmamma. I now foresaw all that would happen; while the honest countryman wisely took advantage of the confusion, and bade us 'a good night.'

The indelicate insinuation which my husband's words conveyed, and his insulting looks, so overwhelmed me that I fainted in the chaise, from whence I was conveyed to a farm-house. This

adventure took place at Tallington.—On seeing my situation, a nobleman who resided in that neighbourhood, with his servants, came to my assistance. My husband expertly attributed my distress to fatigue, and said I should 'soon be better.' This satisfied every enquiry, and we proceeded on our journey; I trembling, my daughter shrieking, and my husband driving the chaise with terrifying velocity. In this alarming situation, at the hazard of fracturing my limbs, I leaped from the carriage; and, seating myself on a bank, refused to proceed with him.

At this moment some horsemen appearing, he requested me again to take my seat in the chaise, promising that I

should have the command of the reins myself. With this permission I consented; and my husband mounting a horse which the servant led, followed by the wheels of the carriage, dictating and commanding with imperious authority.

At length we reached Stamford, where my husband earnestly conjured me to conceal what had passed from my mother. My daughter was conveyed to her bed, extremely indisposed from the agitations of the day. I pleaded illness as an excuse to retire to rest; but the moment I had composed my spirits to a tranquil slumber, the bed-curtains were torn open, and I was ordered to quit the chamber: I joy-

fully obeyed. But here the stern injunction did not end: the bed was to be searched in which I was to sleep; under and over did the prying eyes of jealous fury endeavour to find a new cause for anger. He now remembered I had on my finger a brilliant ring: this he demanded; and, as soon as he obtained it, politely informed me, 'I might go to the devil!'

The following day my mother insisted on returning to the Wolds. She had not provided herself with money for so sudden an expedition, and therefore requested Mr. Sumbel to repay the sum she had lent me for the expenses of our journey to him. This he refused, and also ordered that no carriage should be

procured for her conveyance. I embraced a moment of his absence to order a chaise for her: it came to the inn yard. My husband shortly after returning, ordered the horses either to be withdrawn, or for us to be conveyed instantly to Dr. Willis's, at the same time declaring I was mad. In this situation, surrounded by a crowd, a clergyman's dashing daughter, between thirty and forty years of age, of the name of Ray, opening a door which faced the carriage, requested we would enter the parlour—shocked at my distress, and considering my persecutor little less than insane. I had scarcely power to speak, but my mother gave an explanation of the violence of her son-in-law, which procured me a

liberal protection—as I supposed. My husband now burst into the apartment, *sans ceremonie*, exclaiming, to the astonishment of every one but myself, "Where is my wife? wherever she is, I will be;—and that is my mother!"

He was now requested to behave with propriety, which irritated him the more. "I wish I had her in my own country!" vociferated he....."I did not know that gentlemen of your persuasion had any country," interrupted Miss Ray. This speech Mr. Sumbel never forgot. After some time had passed in altercation, this lady endeavoured to reconcile us to each other, and accomplished her intention for a while. But my mother, being hurt considerably by

the ill conduct of her son-in-law, was determined to hasten her return into Yorkshire; and the idea of my quitting my native country, as I had promised the Moor on his permitting me to see my children, together with his cruelty and caprice in protesting he would divorce me on the most vain and frivolous pretexts whenever his temper was in the least ruffled, so operated on her mind and feelings, that she advised me to accompany her and my daughter back, till my friends should write to him to advise our separation, and a distinct maintenance for me, unless we could live on better terms.

We had scarcely been friends a

few minutes, before a messenger came from his lodgings to inform him a nobleman waited there for him. He left us together, with a peremptory command that we should immediately follow him. As soon as he was gone, the former idea of being obliged to quit my native country so soon, added to my mother's persuasions, operated so strongly on me, that I determined, be the consequence what it might, to go back with her to Yorkshire. But the old complaint of 'no money' was once more the obstacle to our journey. In this dilemma I sent for the landlady where my husband lodged, and told her plainly my intention and situation. The woman felt

for me: she said she had not the money; but as my trunk contained many valuables, she would procure me the necessary cash from a friend of hers, if I would leave it as a deposit, which she did in a very little time. We ordered a chaise at another inn, and sent it a little out of the town, where we got into it, and set off. We kept looking constantly through the back of the chaise, expecting the moment he missed us he would follow us into Yorkshire: but in that we were mistaken; for we arrived there without his making his appearance.

On our arrival at the Wolds, Mr. Topham received us with politeness:

he gave me to understand something should be done with Mr. Sumbel for me; and said I should be extremely wrong to go out of the country with such an ill-tempered man.

I remained at his house but a short time, when I began to perceive the constraint my presence was to him; and a circumstance occurred which by no means added to the happiness of the family.

Miss Walton at this time resided in the house, and did not seem to care who knew of her intimacy with Mr. Topham; for one night, in going upstairs to bed with my infants and my mother, she went into his bed-room

before us all. Next morning I represented to him the impropriety of such conduct before the children; and so much offense was taken at it, that I was obliged to make up my mind to leave the house: but she was shortly after compelled to do so herself, to make room for some other Anne Bullen I suppose. Her insolence became at length so insufferable, that Mr. Topham made up a match between her and a music-master, who attended the children. He was at York at the time of the solemnization of the marriage: whether he wished to be out of the way when he was about to lose his *dear*, or whether business called him there, I cannot say. But she wrote to him that

she expected some things towards house-keeping; and he returned the answer to my eldest daughter to let her take from the house whatever she thought proper. As she never was remarkable for her moderation, so she was determined this should not be an exception; she hired a waggon, and loaded it with a quantity of furniture. The next morning there was not a change of linen in the house; and she even had the impudence to take the different cups and prizes won by the celebrated grey-hound, Snow-ball, which were afterwards got back with a great deal of trouble. She sold the greatest part of the furniture at Scarborough; for, some time after, I recognised a counterpane

on a bed in that town, which I knew to have been my own.

I retired to a small cottage at Foxholes during the day, which place having no comfortable accommodation at night, I accepted of the hospitable and friendly solicitation of Colonel Thornton to sleep at his seat at Faulkney-hall, he not being there at the time. Let the weather be what it would, I daily went to see my children; besides, I constantly expected an answer from Mr. Sumbel to my friends' intercession in my behalf.

About this period Colonel Thornton came down to his seat with some gentlemen, for the diversion of shooting and hawking. Thinking I had trespassed long enough on his friendship and good-

ness, I meant to sleep that evening at a small farm-house contiguous to the cottage at Foxholes; but I had scarcely arrived there for that purpose, when I received a polite invitation, with a horse for me to return, informing me there was still room for me at his house. More gentle and kind treatment I never experienced. The next day one of the party solicited me to give my imitations at Malton for a distressed family. I consented. The colonel politely ordered his carriages, prevailed on the whole of his party to accompany him, gave a very elegant supper, and contributed to the relief of the poor family with his usual humanity. Though one of the most rainy nights I ever remembered,

the house was very crowded, and the end designed fully answered.

My receiving no letters whatever from the Moor, and the lady who had lived with me so many years making repeated application by letter to me to return to the cottage she had hired on our account, about twenty miles from the metropolis, prior to our setting out for Yorkshire—alleging that Mr. Sumbel must have gone abroad, as she heard nothing from him, and that she did not know what to do with our property—I became desirous of departing. But to accomplish this, as I was entirely without money, the *great sultan's* wife was indebted to the goodness of the Rev. Mr. Sykes and Colonel Thornton, to

whose houses during her stay she was frequently invited, for their liberal contributions to defray the expenses of her journey.

Revenge is one of the most grateful sensations to a little mind, in which cunning is always substituted for sense.—Mr. Sumbel had received the most elegant education that Europe could give him; yet, notwithstanding his immense wealth, there was a littleness in all his actions which I despised. The expression of Miss Ray stung him to the quick; and he resolved to have satisfaction if it cost him his fortune, or even his life. The early bias his mind had received, from the manners and customs of the despotic government un-

der which he was born, could neither be soothed nor allayed till he had accomplished his purpose; and he resolved to effect by stratagem what he dare not do by open force. He was also exasperated at my leaving him; and he resolved, by a *ruse-de-guerre*, to be revenged of us both.

At our interview at Stamford, Miss Ray very politely gave us an invitation to go to her father's on our return, and spend a few weeks with her. As soon as I was gone, he recollected that she had pressed us to go to Northamptonshire, and *he* accordingly set out for that place. The report of his great riches, and the large quantity of diamonds he had about him, had reached

Weldon, the residence of her father; so that, as might naturally be supposed, he was received with the greatest hospitality and politeness by the clergyman and his daughter. Miss Ray was a lady of superior education, and supposed to possess a great mind; but the sight of the diamonds, many of which he presented her with, and his frequent insinuations that I had eaten meat forbidden by his religion (which entitled him to a divorce according to the Mosaic law), made it bend a little, and condescend to look upon *the man of no country* with a favourable eye. After he had been a short time at Weldon, he made formal proposals of marriage to Miss Ray, and obtained her father's

consent. He prevailed on them both to come to London, and took for them a house in Newman-street; sent in plate, china, and every requisite; and clothes for her to a large amount.

Things were in this situation when I arrived at my cottage at Hyde from Yorkshire. I was welcomed by my sincere friend who had taken care of it during my absence; and had not time to take off my travelling-dress, when Mr. Sumbel's carriage drove to the door. He was extremely glad to see me; said he knew I was coming, as he had all my actions in the country most carefully watched; and was so pleased with the manner in which I had conducted myself, that he had come to meet me the

moment he heard of my arrival. Though at the time I conceived it impossible for him to be made acquainted with it, I gave him credit for his expressions (such power has flattery over the female mind), and became reconciled to him. Little did I think at the moment that his intention in coming to the cottage was to remove the plate and furniture to Newman-street; but such was the case, and it was rather singular I should arrive at the critical moment to preserve it.

We returned to London together, went to our house in Pall-mall, and continued the *entire* day the greatest friends. Next morning, getting up rather early, he requested me to accom-

pany him to breakfast to a lady's, an acquaintance of ours, whom I should be very much surprised to see. The carriage being ordered, we drove to Newman-street. On entering the room, I was not a little surprised to see the sideboard decorated with some of the plate which he kept solely for religious purposes; but I thought it was some eccentricity of his, or something done to amuse me. I was endeavouring to account within myself for all this mystery, when the door opened, and Miss Ray was announced. Our embarrassment was mutual, though at the moment I could not account for it on my part; but I was very soon relieved by seeing Mr. S. go over to her, and, with all his

Moorish impetuosity, exclaim, "My God, madam! you are not glad to see my wife!" —"Your *wife*, sir!" cried Miss Ray with emotion: "I thought you had been divorced from her!"—Her agitation at the moment is beyond description; when my husband, looking at me with an arch smile, seemed to exult in the wounded feelings of the unfortunate lady.

To complete the *denoüement* of the piece, her aged father came into the room, with locks as white as snow, and his aged back receiving from time that curve which human art cannot prevent.—"Give me leave," said my husband, "to introduce Mrs. Sumbel to you, sir." I felt for the old gentleman;

he fetched a deep groan, seated himself by the fire, rubbed his knees, and exclaimed, "Oh, child! how came you thus to deceive your poor old father?"

Breakfast was at length brought in; and Mr. Sumbel, with a great deal of irony, pressed Miss Ray to eat some toast; which she declining, he at length said to her—"Miss Ray, as *you have a country* to go to, I recommend your setting off for it as soon as possible!"

Thus did he put himself to an immense expense and trouble, to be revenged on her for her former expression. The consequence was, finding herself so disappointed, she went down to Northamptonshire, became insane, and shortly after died.

We continued for a week in the most perfect harmony, nothing occurring to ruffle us, except one or two of the servants being occasionally knocked down! But as a long calm is generally the forerunner of a storm, and there is such a sameness in being good-tempered for an entire week, he resolved to let me taste some of the bitters as well as the sweets.

As his father always intended that he should succeed him in his situation as premier to the emperor, he determined to go to Morocco, and present himself at court; and, to make his visit the more acceptable, he laid out large sums of money in presents: among the items of which, there was £.20,000 worth of brass cannon.

It had long been his darling theme that I was to go with him; and, in person, supplicate the young emperor to receive him, as they had been boys together.

The necessary forms to be observed on the occasion were regularly rehearsed at our house in Pall-mall, under the direction of my husband, and several Moors and Turks who attended for the purpose, himself always filling the imperial chair.

Every thing being ready for our departure, he at length told me I must prepare myself for the journey. The idea of leaving my children, and his bad temper, preyed so much upon my

spirits, that I began to waver.—One day he invited me and a lady, a friend of mine, to go on board a ship in the river, bound to Mogadore, to visit the captain and his wife. We accordingly went; but, on seeing the great bustle in the vessel, as if preparing for a distant voyage, I asked the captain's wife if her husband took passengers. "O yes, madam," replied she; "and your husband has taken the entire ship, that you and *your friend* may be better accommodated." It immediately occurred to me they were preparing to sail that very night, and that I should not be permitted to go on shore again. I became alarmed to such a degree, that

she perceived her imprudence in telling me what her husband had strictly enjoined her to keep a profound secret, and entreated me not to betray her to him, as the consequence might be fatal to her; he being of the same temper and country as *my* lord. I assured her I would not, if she would assist me in my escape, which she promised to do, and kept her word, in the following manner:—Whilst our husbands were in the cabin, regaling themselves with wine, and making their arrangements for our immediate departure, the captain's wife proposed to us to take a walk upon deck: providentially, at that moment a waterman's boat came along-side with some things for the

sailors. They were so engaged in examining what he brought them, that they took no notice of us. She called the waterman's boy to her, and told him in a whisper, if he would put the ladies on shore, while his master was busied with the sailors, she would give him two shillings. Money—that bane of human society!—tempted the boy to immediate compliance; and, with great trepidation, we descended into the boat, with all the concomitant fears attending our situation. We begged him to row as fast as possible; and assisted ourselves to ply the oars. We reached the shore without being discovered; and finding ourselves once more among Englishmen, with grateful

hearts we returned thanks to the Almighty for our deliverance.

We had time to get home before he knew of our escape, which he no sooner ascertained than (as I afterwards learned) he became outrageous; so much so, that the captain ran to hide, and the sailors were obliged to hold him to prevent his committing some act of violence. As he did not know upon whom or where to revenge his disappointment, he insisted upon being put on shore, and immediately followed me to our house in Pall-mall. From this moment there was nothing but distrust on both sides;—I afraid he would adopt some stratagem to carry me off, and he

that I would run away from him the first favourable opportunity.

Perceiving an entire change in my behaviour towards him, he justly guessed what I was meditating, and determined to take the most effectual means to prevent it. He often declared that he would sooner part with his life than me; that, the moment I should attempt to leave him should be my last; and that he would afterwards offer up himself as a voluntary sacrifice to my manes.

He purchased a small case of pistols, of capital workmanship, and often said he intended to shoot me with them. One day I perceived him more

thoughtful than usual, and in the evening he talked very seriously on the pains of death, expressing a wish to leave this world and all its troubles. He took down the Bible and read a little, then took pen, ink, and paper, and wrote; he often went out of the room, and returned. I retired to bed; but, in consequence of the agitation occasioned by his unaccountable behaviour, I could not sleep; so I set up in the bed and conversed with him for about three hours.

He then quitted the room, and returned about twelve o'clock, with a pistol in each hand: he instantly fired one of them at me, which would most certainly have put an end to my exist-

ence had I been lying down; for the moment I saw him present it, I fell senseless on the bed, by which the ball missed me. The servants burst into the room, and seized him in the very act of attempting to end his own existence. The watchmen hearing my shrieks and the report of the pistol, burst open the door, and took him into custody with the pistol still in his hand. I came to myself at this moment, and, perceiving his situation, ran towards, clung round him, and would not permit them to take him away from me; declaring what had happened was merely an accident, and that I was not hurt. Upon being assured no harm had occured to me, and a few pounds being given

among them, they went away very quietly.

When they were gone, I prevailed on my husband to go to bed up stairs, and went to my room, which he locked after me, and took away the key. Finding myself alone, I put on my clothes, and called through the keyhole to one of the Moorish servants. I begged of him, if possible, to steal the key from his master, and let me out. The poor man felt so much for my situation, that he made answer (notwithstanding he knew it would cost him his life if he were discovered) he would attempt it; which he did, and succeeded. I got out of the house immediately, ran to the St. James's coffee-house in St.

James's-street, and requested the waiter to get me a coach, which he complied with; and I went to a lady, a friend of mine, who resided in the neighbourhood of Grosvenor-square: she was kind enough to let me in, though it was, by the time I reached her, past two o'clock in the morning.

From the perturbed state of my mind, and the impression left on it by his attempt to deprive me of existence, I determined upon calling my friends together, and taking their advice. It was their unanimous opinion, from his natural disposition and atrocious conduct on two recent occasions, that my life was not safe, unless I took regular legal proceedings to insure it. Conscious

of the propriety of their reasoning, I immediately had him brought before the magistrates of Bow-street, as the only alternative remaining; and I hope the world will allow it was a justifiable one.

The conduct of the magistrates on the business was meritorious, and highly redounds to their honour. Sir William Addington, addressing him in a feeling and pathetic manner, strongly reprobated the method in which he attempted to satiate his revenge, and advised him to conform to the laws and manners of the country in which he was resident; adding, however painful it might be to his feelings, he must commit him to prison, unless he produced the most undeniable security

for his future good behaviour, as well towards his wife as to society at large.

The penalty inflicted by the magistrates being to a considerable amount, he was compelled to find two sureties of undeniable character and property. Mr. Calvert, and his banker in the city, came forward; and, entering into recognisances with him, he was accordingly set at liberty.

Prior to his appearing before the magistrates, he wrote me several letters begging my forgiveness, which I was very much inclined to grant him; but the dread of a recurrence, which would undoubtedly have proved fatal, the positive injunctions of my friends, and the commands and restrictions of the magis-

trates, totally prevented me, though I must confess my *own* feelings preponderated on his side.

As I conceived he would not let the business rest here, but would adopt some method or other to persecute me, I took lodgings in Covent-garden to be near the police. He sent one of the Turkish ambassador's suite several times to me, imploring me to forgive and return to him again; but, as "a burnt child dreads the fire," I was afraid to trust him.

Finding he could not prevail on me by lenient measures, he attempted to use force. He went to a mad-house at Hoxton, and engaged a room and keepers for me, who actually came to my

lodgings to take me away. The sight of the strait-waistcoat they brought had nearly made me a fit subject for them; but the lady who was with me soon convinced them they were misinformed, and they took their leave with many apologies for their intrusion.

I changed my lodgings to Southampton-street, where he sent to me for the last time, offering to make any settlement on me I thought proper to name, if I would live with him again; to which I returned a positive denial.

The next attempt he made to be revenged on me for my refusal was somewhat singular*; and to explain it

* See Appendix [O].

to my readers it will be necessary to mention some forms among the Jews respecting their wives, the absurdity of which will speak for themselves.—As all their ceremonies, whether of a domestic or religious nature, are regulated according to the Mosaic laws, they (with the low cunning so peculiar to the people of that nation) always pervert the meaning to answer their own purposes; for I firmly believe the Jewish faith is merely a quibble of words arising from interested motives—a shame to acknowledge they have remained so many years under a delusion respecting the Messiah, or that the words of the Scripture must be fulfilled respecting

them, calling them "a stiff-necked and misbelieving people."

The Mosaic laws, as described in Leviticus, are very strict with respect to their food; and if a Jewess eat any thing forbidden by them, her husband can divorce her. The form of doing it is very simple; and as the Jews ever have an eye to economy, they avoid, by *their* mode, the expense of a lawsuit or a process in Doctors' Commons. The husband writes down, on a slip of paper, the first verse of the twenty-fourth chapter of Deuteronomy, and formally hands it to his wife. The words of it are as follow: — "When "a man hath taken a wife and mar-

"ried her, and it comes to pass that "she hath no favour in his eyes "because he hath found some uncleanness in her, then let him write her a "bill of divorcement, and give it in her "hand, and send her out of his house." So that a Jewess never dare take a savoury bit, without running the risk of being told "to take up her *bed, and walk.*"—I dare say many of them are obliged to walk without one. That it is in the Mosaic law is beyond a doubt, but that it was ever intended to be put in full force I cannot believe; and Lord Kenyon was of the same opinion, as will appear by the sequel.

The house in which we lived in Pall-mall was taken, ready furnished, from

a person of the name of Abgood; who, upon his application to Mr. Sumbel for the rent, received for answer, that it was I who took the house, and I must pay for it, as I was no longer his wife, he having given me my divorce.

Mr. Abgood immediately commenced a suit in the court of King's-bench against him, for the amount of his bill. His counsel, Mr. Erskine, said in Court, Mr. Sumbel was not a Jew, but a Mahometan—a subterfuge he adopted after the action was brought against him, to endeavour to invalidate our marriage. He also produced a letter from the Duke of Portland, stating that Mr. S. was envoy and secretary of state to the Emperor of Morocco, the son to his

prime-minister, and thought his client was entitled to an hearing.

Mr. Sumbel rose, and began to speak; the first sentence of which was, that he had never been married to 'this woman.' "So much the worse," replied his lordship: "you are the more wicked: you and she have lived together; you have allowed her to go by your name, and lived with her during the time the debt was contracted; so you must have sanctioned it. If what was impossible could be done, you are certainly in the hands of a counsel that would achieve impossibilities." He then recommended a verdict for the plaintiff.—The verdict was of course given

against him, to the full amount of the action *.

It is unnecessary for me to enter into a refutation of his assertion, that I was not his wife; it being a circumstance so well known to the number of prisoners then in the Fleet, many of whom were present at the ceremony; and even his own letters are a sufficient testimony, some of which I shall give in the Appendix †.

He was very much exasperated at the trial going against him; but he had determined no power on earth should compel him to pay, and from which,

* See Appendix [P].

† See Appendix [Q].

his determination once fixed, nothing could make him swerve.

He went immediately to Prescott's, his banker in the city, and drew out all his money, to prevent an attachment being issued against it, and lodged it with Hammersley in Pall-mall; then waited on the Duke of Portland, told him he had made friends with me, and that business of the utmost consequence called him to Denmark; and, as a vessel would sail for that kingdom that very night, he begged his Grace would grant him a passport for himself and me, as the Alien-office was closed for that day. The duke, believing what he said, complied with his request, and he

set sail from England within three hours after.

I knew not of his departure till the next morning, which I learned by mere chance. I went to the Alien-office to ask a gentleman to procure me a frank: he seemed surprised to see me, and said, "I thought, madam, you had gone with your husband!" I begged he would ease my mind by telling me what he meant; which he instantly did, by informing me of the particulars of the passport which the duke had granted the evening before. On my return to my lodgings, his brother called upon me, whom I informed of his abrupt exit. Alarmed for the large sum of money re-

maining due to him by Mr. Stumbel, he immediately sent the silver oar after him; but it was too late, for it arrived at Gravesend twelve hours after the ship had sailed.

I have since learned from a gentleman that he went to Altona in Denmark, where he built a large street at his own expense; and that, for the last few years of his life, his sole amusement was fishing: but the place where he enjoyed that amusement was rather singular.—He had a very long room built for the purpose, in which was a large reservoir of water, that contained fish of different descriptions; and he would sit whole days angling in it. If the fish did not bite quick enough to suit his

Moorish temper, the water was let off, they were beaten to pieces with a large stick, and the domestics were immediately ill-treated.

If the rest of the Moors are of his disposition, they must be a very unhappy people. As, in his own country, he was accustomed to have all his wants anticipated, so he expected it in every other: but, under such circumstances, the situation of both master and servant must be dreadful; for among them the attendant who commits an error (sometimes even of the slightest nature) is deprived of his existence; and the only means they have to guard against it, is to cut off the master either by the dagger or by poison; so that a fear

of death constantly hangs over both: while the Briton, born under a mild and fostering government, is equally protected from the peer to the peasant: and if we contrast the characters of the two nations, it is the greatest proof we can have that the government of a country always gives a bias to the customs and manners of its inhabitants.

After his departure, several people to whom I had formerly been indebted commenced suits against me.....What a mistaken idea it is, when misfortune once shews itself, for all the creditors to pour down like a mountain-torrent, and, by driving him deeper into the abyss, either totally prevent the debtor from ever being able to discharge the de-

mand, or in the most cruel and barbarous manner deprive him of his liberty for several years! and many have the inhumanity to detain the unfortunate man even after they are well acquainted with his inability to answer the demand. He is often obliged to drag on a miserable existence till the legislature's interference, which often comes too late; and imprisonment becomes at length so habitual, that there is equally as much inhumanity in turning the unfortunate prisoner from his cell (his then only home), as sending him out upon the world deprived of reputation, shelter, property, or any means by which he can subsist. Often have I known the unhappy prisoner receive his discharge

with reluctance, as liberty brought to his recollection his once happy family and home; and he, in taking a final adieu of those walls which from custom he was used to look at rather with pleasure than horror, heaved a deep sigh at being once more obliged to mix in that society from which he had been so long excluded; and, horrid to tell! by the inhumanity of a man born in the land of Britain as well as himself!—But it is to be hoped that those illustrious noblemen, Lords Moira and Rodesdale, will persevere in their truly laudable efforts to expunge from our bold but present law between debtor and creditor the disgrace of our nation in the eyes of all-

rope, and the detestation of every free-born Englishman.

I was once more obliged to remove to the Fleet, where I might have remained till this day, but for the friendship of a gentleman, who came forward and purchased the rules for me. He was a visitor at our house in the days of my prosperity; and, shocked to find the inhumanity with which I was treated, generously assisted me: he did it in that delicate and friendly manner which always enhances the value of a favour, as it was void of ostentation or interest: he was guided by those pure motives alone which spring from a benevolent heart. But I am extremely sorry to state that

that benevolence towards me was attended with considerable loss to him, without any intention on my part. I received a letter from him one day, requesting me to come and give my imitations to some friends of his. Anxious to oblige my benefactor, I went immediately: information was given by some of the servants; and he was under the necessity of paying the entire sum, with costs, he being my security.

As it may appear an enigma to many of my readers how I could be arrested for debt, being a married woman, and not be able to plead my coverture, an explanation is probably necessary. It was decided in the court of King's bench, by Lord Kenyon, that an ac-

tress, having a separate income from her husband, must be liable for her *own* debts.—As in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Baddely, who had separated by mutual consent: he was so often arrested for large debts which she contracted, that he might have remained in prison all his life but for the decision of his lordship.

My sister returned again from India, and invited me to her house at Hammersmith. I must do her the justice to say, that she behaved towards me with great tenderness, and I remained with her for nearly a year and a half. On the following summer I went down to Brighton, to give my imitations of the different actresses of the day, and was honoured with the patronage of her

grace the Duchess of Marlborough. Here I remained for some time, and was solicited to give them at Lewes; whither I was preparing to set out, when I was arrested at the suit of Hardy and Wilmore, of Welbeck-street, milliners:—I mention their names on purpose to acquit my brother-in-law of being at all connected with my arrestation this time. It happened rather unfortunately, that on that very morning, as if it had been ordained by fate, I had not a single guinea in my pocket. The bailiff lived in the town to which I was going, and kept a lock-up house (a place unknown in any country but England), and pressed me very much to go there: but the idea of appearing in a style so dif-

ferent from what was intended for me in the morning did not at all please me, so that I told him I would prefer going to the county-gaol at Horsham. He used every argument to dissuade me, and represented the length of the journey there in the most *feeling* manner; but I had predetermined to the contrary. He next enquired if he should order a chaise, but I plainly told him I had not a single shilling in my pocket to pay for it; and, however unfortunate my situation was, I would prefer walking the entire way to doing so unhandsome an action. A taxed cart was at length procured; and, on one of the most inclement days I remember, I was conveyed to Horsham, where I remained

for a few days, till the return of post brought me bail from London.

A short time previous to this, Mr. Samuel returned from India. He never honoured me with a visit, or offered to settle the several sums I had paid for him formerly: but his debts were not registered in the court of honour, so that they were very soon forgotten! I sent several friends to him to explain my situation; and he at last consented to allow me a guinea a week during my life. Thankful for even that trifle, I determined to leave London.

I received a letter from Mr. Stephen Kemble at Newcastle, wishing to engage me for six nights, during the races, at that place. The amiable cha-

racters of him and Mrs. Kemble induced me to comply; conceiving, with the guinea a week allowed me by Mr. Samuel, I might live tolerably easy in the country. But the same unlucky planet that presided over every action of my life seemed in the present instance to shine with double lustre.—I took my passage in a vessel bound for that place: as the weather was so extremely fine, the boy who attended took up a small scuttle which was in the cabin deck, and forgot to put it on again; not being aware of the circumstance, in walking across I fell into the opening and was much hurt: my leg was very much bruised; and, by the time we reached Newcastle, I was not only unable to perform,

but was afraid of a mortification taking place. Mr. Kemble behaved to me in the handsomest manner, as well as Mrs. Kemble; for when my leg got a little better I went to see a play, and she understanding I had paid at the door, wrote me the following polite letter:—

"Dear Madam,

"I have not known your address, or I would long since have sent you an admission. It really distresses me to think *you* should pay for going to a theatre; and I never think of it till I see you on the spot.—I inclose you a ticket for to-morrow night; and request you will not think of paying in future, as you are welcome to the theatre at *all* times.

"Yours truly,

"E. KEMBLE.

"*Theatre, 3d Act.*"

I also lay before my readers the one I received from Mr. S. Kemble on his engaging me, to shew the contrast between him and John. How capricious is Dame Fortune, to pour her favours, unsought or unasked for, into the lap of the *one*, while the other, a worthy, deserving, humble man, has been all his life struggling to gain a scanty though honourable livelihood!—while the *other*, wallowing in riches, seems to grow more avaricious every guinea he accumulates!—

"*Durham, July the 26th*, 1803.

"Dear Madam,

"I HAVE this morning received your letter; and it really gives me serious concern to tell you, that at this season of the year it is entirely out of my power to offer you

any engagement worthy your acceptance. I confess I think it is to be lamented that you should not have an opportunity of exercising those talents with which you are so extraordinarily endowed: therefore, if you will perform Lady Randolph and Isabella, and also give your imitations, in the assize-week at Newcastle, I will give you twenty guineas.

"Mrs. K.'s compliments.

"I am, dear Madam, yours sincerely,

"S. KEMBLE."

My leg getting better, I was engaged by Mr. S. Kemble to play and give my imitations during the sessions-week. I played Isabella the second night, with the farce of The Agreeable Surprise, and gave my imitations, to a crowded audience. Unluckily for me, the people in the gallery not understanding them,

were at a loss to know what was meant. They were tolerably quiet till I gave Mrs. Martyr, in the song,

"When William at eve meets me down at the stile:"

in singing the words,

"While the moon plays yon branches among,"

they were re-echoed from the gallery:—I was continually interrupted. At length a man, who, from his appearance, seemed to have just made his escape from a coal-mine, called out from the gallery to me, with a stentorian voice, "Who is that you are imitating now?" My irritable temper instantly burst forth; and I replied, "*Don't you know, Mr. Coalheaver?*" made my exit in a rage, and never after appeared before an audience in that city. It was

the only place in England where I gave my imitations that they were not understood.

I immediately went to Scarborough, determining to end my days in the neighbourhood of my children, and live upon the trifling pittance allowed me, hoping they would notice their mother after all her disagreeables. From Scarborough it is sixteen miles to the Wolds; and, not being able to procure a better conveyance, I determined to walk. I accordingly set out, accompanied by my maid, with a few changes of clothes in a bundle. We had proceeded about three miles, when at a distance I perceived my three girls riding down the hill. I instantly ex-

claimed to my servant—"Those are my three young ladies!"—"That is impossible!" replied she....."Such great folks as them! and with a servant after them, too!" The honest girl had scarcely time to say more, when they rode up. My eldest daughter (Mrs. Ford) perceiving me, desired my daughter Maria to ride on at a gallop, and told the groom to follow her, that he might not perceive me. They informed me that they were on their way to Scarborough, to order dresses for a ball that was to be given there in a few days; and told me to go on to the Cottage-inn, which was about thirteen miles farther. I set forward; and, as I have been swerving from the beaten track all my

life, I missed my way; nor did I ascertain we had left the main road till we had proceeded about five miles. Our distress at being told it by a peasant can scarcely be imagined, as we both began to be very tired; which the honest countryman perceiving, he kindly offered to convey us in his little market-cart, which we joyfully accepted, and arrived at the Cottage-inn, where my daughters waited for me. They spent the evening with me, returned next morning and passed the day with me. Their professions of love and affection made me forget my troubles; and I may certainly say *that* was one of the happiest days of my life. But they were *merely* professions for *now* they

scarcely condescend to acknowledge they ever had a mother: but I sincerely hope the perusal of these pages may put them in mind of her; and it may prove an example to them to bring up their infants in love and duty to themselves, as they must be convinced what a dreadful chasm they leave in the heart from their conduct to me.

I took board and lodging in their neighbourhood, on purpose to be near them, where the fare was of the coarsest kind: indeed, sometimes our dinner consisted of puddings, boiled so hard that they almost required to be cut in two with a hatchet; but, as I was near my children, they were viands to me.

At length my daughter Harriet wrote to me to let me know I must not think of residing in that neighbourhood, as her father would not allow it: indeed, his meanness led him to take every means to persecute me; for I was now no longer the rich Mrs. Sumbel, and was of course avoided by them all as a pestilence.—There certainly must be something very contagious in poverty!

A very respectable clergyman's lady in the vicinity invited me to dinner; and, out of compliment to me, sent for my children: but Mr. Topham absolutely refused to let them go, for no other reason that I know of, but to harass

me, and Miss Walton being refused a reception at their house.

One day, in crossing the Wolds, my dog Friendly was perceived by Mr. Topham worrying something; he immediately concluded it was one of his hares, and sent me word he would have any only friend shot. Enraged at such low conduct, I immediately sent him what the dog had taken, which happened to be a very fine hedge-hog.

My residence at the Wolds was in a humble farm-house, where I boarded with its happy inhabitants; my only companions, my spinning-wheel and dog Friendly; and my only comfort, to walk around to catch a distant

view of my daughters hunting or taking their morning rides. Often have I crept behind a thicket to steal a peep at them, and repeating the beautiful lines of Prior—

——" behind the spreading hawthorn crept,
" To mark the spot 'my children trod,' and wept!"

It would not require the abilities of the celebrated Fourcroy to analyse the heart of children who could treat me as they have done. My eldest daughter (now Mrs. Ford) I ever tenderly loved; and, while I had it in my power, ever gave her a convincing proof of my affection. From my constant walking through the country my shoes became at length worn out, and I applied to

her to purchase me a new pair, as I had not the means; and I knew her father allowed the *trifling* fees arising from his duty as magistrate for pin-money. She had at the time, *to my knowledge*, four guineas in her purse, and positively refused me, because her father had given her strict orders to the contrary.

Is that child to blame who steels her heart against one parent to gratify any private pique, or to assist in any enmity, against the other? Will it be any excuse to the Almighty that it was the wish of her father that actuated her conduct? Or, is that father to blame who instills such unnatural ideas into the mind of his daughter? May not any

good qualities she possesses be perverted by the same false arguments? . . . .

My unfortunate feet at the time were defended from the ground by a pair of list shoes. The excellent and virtuous mistress of the parsonage at Foxholes saw me with them on, and exclaimed, "Is it possible!" She will now, I am certain, repeat the ejaculation with greater astonishment, when she sees that I have the fortitude to tell to the world how my children and their father have treated me. Her kindness to me will never meet its reward in this world: as her conduct is above reproach, so is her fortune above want; and, like a guardian angel, she stretched forth her hand to me as

the good Samaritan. Charity and humanity alone actuated her goodness to me. From her pillow—the harbinger of peace—she rises in the morning to be blessed with the prayers of the unhappy and unfortunate; and her beautiful daughter grows up an example to her sex, the image of her mother, and an ornament to the county of York.

About this time it began to be rumoured abroad that I was under the protection of a great personage at Kew, and actually believed by many. A gentleman whom I met one *Morning* positively asserted to my face that he was certain it was a fact; and, as he is the very *Chronicle* of news, it must have had a considerable circulation after it

reached him.—He generally derives his information from the most authentic sources; but, for the first time, I must accuse him of being incorrect.—I most solemnly protest it never was the case; and at the time it is so confidently reported that I was under such protection, I was living at the farm-house, on the Wolds, where I paid half-a-guinea a week for my board, without a shoe to my foot, in the manner I have just mentioned; where, being indebted four pounds—Mr. Samuel not sending me my guinea a week, and not being able to prevail on my children or their father to pay the *immense* sum—I was under the necessity of returning to London, which I did in company with a Mr

and Mrs. Proby, who were good enough to give me a seat in their carriage, and shew me every attention and politeness on the road.

On my arrival in town, I was not a little surprised to find myself so warmly received by all my acquaintance. I was waited on by a number whom I as much expected a visit from, as the Great Mogul or the Cham of Tartary. Several tradespeople called upon me to beg my custom. I was *honoured* with many a significant nod in walking the Green-park; and in fact I wanted nothing but peace of mind and money to make me completely happy.

Petitions now poured in to me from all quarters, and many letters to know

there were any answers to the petitions which were sent in while I was in the country. All this was to me as yet an enigma, till one day I met a female in the street who gave me to understand she had taken the liberty of sending a petition to me at Kew, and begged to know if she might hope for an answer, and that there were many left for me the same day. I requested she would explain herself; and was informed by her, that it was the general opinion that I had lately resided at Kew in favour with a great personage, and that many letters and petitions had been directed here to me under such an idea. I set immediately to get the different papers lying there for me; and I was not

a little astonished to find that a person resided near the town, whose features somewhat resembled mine, who had assumed my name, and who actually held the situation the world gave to me.

Could I have descended to do a base action, I had then a most favourable opportunity, the report having been so generally believed. Going one day into a jeweller's shop about some trifle, the man received me with the most marked politeness, and pressed me to take a pair of diamond earrings of great value. I assured him I never should be able to pay him for them; when, with the significant nod and insignificant grin which I had been lately so accustomed to, he assured me I

might command all in his shop if I pleased.—I never would have presumed to touch on so delicate a subject, but that such a report was an entire contradiction to every profession, every action of my life. With all my faults, no one can accuse me of a venal one; and I am certain my living at Kew could be construed into no other.

At last Mr. Samuel totally stopped the guinea a week he allowed me, which was cruel after his promise to continue it during my life—which the following letters from his agent will testify.

"Madam,

"In the absence of Mr. Samuel I opened your late letter addressed to him; and in answer to that and communications of a like

nature previously received, I have once for all to observe, that Mr. S. will not swerve from the nature or extent of the allowance held out to you. As you have viewed, or appear to have viewed, what has been already done as not in part of his allowance, I have his liberty to make a weekly payment to you from Lady-day (a few days after his arrival) to the present date; and on your forwarding a receipt for the amount, the same shall be sent to you by return of post; and I will appoint some person at Shields to pay you the growing allowance weekly or monthly, as you may prefer, and which will be continued so long as you may be the object of it. But the late letters from yourself, and those you have commissioned persons to write on your behalf, have given such offence to Mr. S. that he is determined to send back any future correspondence on that head unopened; and if means like those resorted to are hereafter used, that from that moment he will discontinue an assistance the na-

ture of which you have strangely misunderstood.

"I am, Madam, your obedient servant,

"J. WINGFIELD."

"*Great Marlborough-street,*
5th October, 1803."

"MRS. WELLS SUMBEL."

"Madam,

"ABOVE you will receive my draft for the receipt you sent me. You will have the goodness to put your name upon it before you pay it away.

"I am, Madam,

"Your most obedient servant,

"J. WINGFIELD."

"*Great Marlborough-street,*
22d October, 1803."

"P. S.—My bankers live in old Bond-street."

"MRS. WELLS SUMBEL."

"MR. WINGFIELD presents his compliments to Mrs. Wells Sumbel, and begs to inform her that Mr. Lambton has been so good as to promise to make the payments to her, and that she may apply to him monthly for them; and W. has no doubt of Mr. Samuel's directing them to be continued regularly."

"*Great Marlborough-street,*
23d May, 1804."

"MRS. WELLS SUMBEL."

"MR. WINGFIELD presents his compliments to Mrs. Wells Sumbel, and expects to be in the receipt of some money on Mr. S.'s account in a week or ten days' time; and has no doubt of the payment being then made on her account."

"*Great Marlborough-street,*
Wednesday."

"MRS. WELLS SUMBEL."

"Mr. WINGFIELD presents his compliments to Mrs. Wells Sumbel, and begs to acquaint her that the money will be paid in to the bankers in a few days."

"*Great Marlborough-street,*
Monday."

"MRS. WELLS SUMBEL."

"MR. WINGFIELD presents his compliments to Mrs. Wells Sumbel, has just received some money on Mr. S.'s account, and will make the payment to the bankers immediately."

"*Great Marlborough-street,*
24th July, 1805."

"MRS. WELLS SUMBEL."

"Newcastle, 7th Nov. 1805.

"Madam,

"Observing that there has been paid into our bankers' hands the sum of thirteen pounds two shillings and sixpence for your use, we here inclose you an order for the same amount in return for your receipt dated 25th October last.

"We are, Madam,

"Your obedient servants,

"R. J. Lambton & Co."

"Mrs. L. Summers"

The trifling income my brother-in-law allowed me being withdrawn without assigning any reason, my situation

became extremely serious, as I had no theatrical engagement, nor did it seem likely I should soon get one. I came to a resolution to publish the history of my troubles by subscription; as Mr. Topham had been so long the hero of *his own* tale, I thought it necessary mine should be told as well as his.

The number of the nobility and gentry who did me the honour of subscribing to this work at different times shall ever be remembered with gratitude; the liberality with which I have been treated has left an impression on my mind which nothing but the grave will efface; and it was the means of my being able to try my *quondam* friends. Many curious circumstances

have occurred to me since I began it; but the following one is certainly worthy of notice, from its oddity.—

During the time I was at the World office, many of my friends were indebted to me for an occasional insertion of any circumstance that might tend to bring their names into public notice; and, as the gentleman of whom I am going to speak did not dislike the publicity of *his* name on former occasions, I am sure he can have no objection to it on the present.

Among the number to whom I applied to subscribe I sent to Dr. Moseley, as he had often been at our house, and did not for a moment conceive that he would refuse; when, to my utter as-

tonishment, I received a letter from him with a prescription in it. Curiosity induced me to go to an apothecary, to learn what the composition was to be which I was to take in lieu of my subscription-money. He informed me it was the tincture of foxglove, and was used to lessen the circulation of the blood. I asked him if it would act so in the heart: upon his answering in the affirmative, I declined taking it, as I was confident the blood flowed through mine in a very gentle stream; and though Dr. Moseley is certainly very clever, I was confident he could not mend a broken one! Whether Dr. Moseley directed a wrong letter to me — whether he thought *subscription* and

prescription were synonymous terms—or whether he conceived one of his prescriptions would cure any thing (even an *empty* pocket), I cannot tell; for I never thought it worth my while to send to him to know: if the last, I could insure him more patients than ever Dr. Brodum or Katerfelto had.

I sent next to Mrs. Lewis, widow of the comedian, to request her to allow her daughters to subscribe; but the answer returned was, they had no more money than was allowed by the executors (Mr. Reynolds was the acting one), and could not afford it. I conceive *that* answer the height of ingratitude from their family; for when applied to by Mrs. Lewis, I got her son a

cadetship in the East-India Company's service, and gave him letters of introduction to that country. His communications from thence brought me thanks for my goodness to him, and that he would always sign himself *my soldier*: but when he returned to England as Colonel Lewis, and I was no longer *the* Mrs. Wells, able to make more interest for him, I never saw him, for he never honoured me with a visit; and when I wrote to him to subscribe to this work, I received no answer, which, had he any pretensions to the feelings of a gentleman, he was bound to give. As to the daughters, they were under the influence of their mother: and *this* excuse may be made

for *her*,—but of the small sum of sixty thousand pounds left her, the *immense* sum it would cost them to subscribe *could* not be spared!

My necessities at length became so great, that I was obliged to apply for relief to the Theatrical Fund, which was granted me, and to which I contributed for many years. It is customary, after having paid to it for upwards of twenty-one years, to be permitted to enjoy any assistance the families of performers think proper to allow them. Mr. Fawcett, the secretary, with a great deal of humanity, wrote to my eldest daughter (Mrs. Ford), that he was sorry to inform her I was under the necessity of applying to the fund for relief; and as

most of the performers on it had friends who joined their assistance to the institution, he had not a doubt but my daughters would contribute, as it was impossible I could live on so small a pittance; at the same time adding, that a *trifling* sum yearly from each would greatly alleviate my situation.

To Mr. Fawcett's astonishment he received the following answer to the kind and benevolent letter he wrote to my daughter (Mrs. Ford) in my behalf; whom he, as well as myself, ever conceived entertained the most dutiful affection towards me.—

"Sir,

"I AM sorry to inform you I cannot shew your letter to Mrs. Ford, in the

present situation of her mind, on account of the recent death of her sister (Mrs. Warsop); but it shall be laid before Mr. Topham.

"I remain yours,

"TIMOTHY FORD."

"*Wolds Cottage.*"

"MR. FAWCETT."

That the death of my daughter should be communicated to me in such a manner (who had ever been to her a tender mother) was a dreadful blow to my feelings. Had Mr. Ford one atom of sensibility, conjugal or maternal love, or even a regard to the common forms of ordinary life, he might have spared one solitary moment to communicate to the mother of his wife the sad catastrophe; for

whatever may have been *her* faults through life, *her children* have nothing to accuse her of.

Reader, does such conduct proceed from ignorance or depravity of heart? The brooding murderer on the barren heath, or the most savage barbarian of an Arab tribe, would blush at such unmanly—such unnatural conduct

But Mr. Ford has one consolation left: I *believe* there was a competition between him and Mr. Warsop, which of them could commit the most flagrant breach of every delicate feeling; for I wrote to the latter to know the cause of my daughter's death, and my letter remains unanswered to this day. As both the gentlemen have sons, the beautiful

lines of Junius may not be inapplicable to *them* on this occasion :—

" *If human nature can produce any* " *thing more base and detestable, it must* " *remain undetermined till the son ar-* " *rives at the years of the father.*"

As it may be of service to them in another world—for I am sure it will not be in this—I beg they will study the commandments, but especially the *fifth*.

I must hasten from a scene to which such a retrospect was about to lead me, as I am sure it can neither be pleasing to their feelings nor grateful to mine.

All hopes of assistance from my family being destroyed, and the small income I received from the fund being

insufficient to answer my wants, I was advised by some friends to get up a play; and they offered their assistance. I accordingly applied to the proprietors of the Haymarket theatre, who kindly lent me the house for that night.* All the male

* To Mr. Colman, son of the gentleman with whom I first engaged at the Haymarket, I feel myself particularly indebted, as he did every thing in his power to be of service to me: but, indeed, that is not the only instance in which I have experienced his gentlemanlike conduct and goodness; for on a former occasion, when I had entered into an engagement with him, which my state of health did not permit me to fulfil, he, in the most handsome manner, cancelled it. I most sincerely thank him for his disinterestedness on the business, as I most certainly should have been compelled to pay the penalty agreed on had he not so acted.

dramatis personæ were gentlemen of independent fortune: the management was undertaken by a Mr. Johnston. The patience and zeal he displayed on the occasion has entitled him to my warmest gratitude, as well as his answering for the expenses of the night. The play was Jane Shore; and never was there a a more comic tragedy! No property-man or manager, from the time of Shakspeare, had a more arduous task.

The part of Gloster was undertaken by the surgeon of a man-of-war. When the property-man brought him the dress necessary for the part, he loudly vociferated for stockings, but was informed by him he never supplied *noblemen* of *his* high rank with such

things. They were at length obtained; but he was with great difficulty prevailed on to permit the man to stuff some cloth inside them to deform his legs—as he had ever considered them well made, and had a great wish to sport them that night before the audience. Being at length dressed, the manager represented to him the necessity of having a hump on his back; but to that he would by no means consent. He said it was not the Duke of Gloster that was hump-backed, but Richard the Third; and if his messmates were to see him rigged in such a manner, he should never have any peace in the ward-room:—"See, sir," said he to

the manager, "what a figure the fellow has already made of my legs!"

This weighty matter being settled, the property-man was next called to attend Lord Hastings, who demanded a ruff: he assured him it was entirely out of his line to supply him; but he believed there was an old one in the thunder-and-lightning box, which he would endeavour to find for him. It was at length procured, and the piece went on.

The part of Alicia was very ably performed by a lady who had been instructed by Mr. Thelwell for the occasion. That of Shore by a Mr. Howard, who went through it extremely well, and was very perfect. The part

of Belmont was done by a gentleman who was as good a performer as any independent man need be.

The house was pretty full; I felt myself highly indebted to the different ladies and gentlemen for their assistance. We were very near having one of our performers drowned between the acts—but not in tears: unacquainted with the passages behind the scenes, he mistook his way, and fell into the reservoir of water.

With feelings rather acute, the different struggles I have had in combatting a life of trouble have affected both my temper and my nerves:—let those who blame the former take into consideration the manner in which I have been

treated by every person I have been concerned with through life, without almost an exception :—and the several incidents which have occurred to me of late years have followed each other in such regular succession, that the existence of the one seemed, from its magnitude or sudden transition, to obliterate the effects or remembrance of the other.

I had now been in London for some time without any means of existence, except the liberality of my subscribers to these pages. The numerous efforts I was obliged to make at this period are not very interesting; for, as that celebrated lexicographer Johnson (though he did not know how to pronounce the

word *aiches)* justly observed, the anecdotes of poverty are not worth relating; but as I had determined, when I sat down to write my life, to lay before my readers a faithful narrative, I shall endeavour to do it as far as my memory will allow me. The world, in their animadversions on the different circumstances which occur in common life, without once considering the motives which actuate our conduct, always put the worst construction on them; and they are in general so prone to listen with avidity to any story to the disadvantage of others, that it can be accounted for by the best philosophers in no other manner than from the depravity of the age, or *the inordinate use of tea*; for the vo-

taries of scandal hold their baneful orgies at its shrine, and pour forth more ills upon the world during their libations than ever issued from Pandora's box.

The different reports circulated about me at length made some people to whom I owed trifling sums find me out; and I was under the necessity of once more removing my lodgings. I called at a house in Piccadilly, to enquire if a lady, an acquaintance of mine, had left town; and was informed by the lady who then resided there, that she had quitted some time, but was pressed very much by her to walk in and sit down for a minute; and I then first saw the amiable and accomplished Mrs. Robinson, of literary

memory. She was a lady who at first sight would engage your friendship and esteem, from her frankness and the elegant polish of her manners. She immediately recognised me: she had heard of my misfortunes, and, with that feeling and goodness of heart, her leading characteristic through life, offered to render me any service that was in her power. She pressed me to stay to dinner; and, as I told her my object in that part of the town was to look for lodgings, she sent her servant in the neighbourhood, and they were procured within a few doors of her.

I spent most of my time with her and her elegant daughter; and were it not for their goodness to me at that

time, I know not what I must have done. Many a tedious and unhappy hour was beguiled in the company of that lady. She joined to the most perfect understanding a great flow of spirits, which Providence endowed her with to enable her to support the misfortune of a paralysis of her limbs, with which she was afflicted from getting wet in travelling through France in a cabriolet; being in such haste, and so alive to the call of friendship—as the business on which she went was of serious consequence to a *friend* of hers—that she would not stop to change her clothes: the melancholy consequence was, the deprivation above stated. She was extremely fond of any

little amusement that she thought would engage my mind, and prevent my reflecting on my unhappy fate.

I one day told her of a gentleman who constantly pestered me with his addresses, and was upon such good terms with his own charms, that he absolutely thought them irresistible; but, unluckily for him, the charms I most admired (those of the mind) he was totally deficient in; and, as a proof of it, his knowledge of geography extended no farther than the boundaries of the county of Tipperary. She proposed our playing him some innocent trick to expose his folly, and have the pleasure of laughing at him. As the gentleman may condescend to peruse these pages,

if he has not altogether forgotten how to read—for as to his writing, I am informed it would require a man skilled in deciphering Chinese hieroglyphics to make it out—he may now learn the source whence he received one of the anonymous appointments which his vanity led him to suppose was real: and as we were determined he should not be the solitary object of our mirth, we got two companions to keep him company. But before I enter into further particulars, I beg leave to give a short sketch of the gentleman.—

He was born in the sweet county of Tipperary, of honest (I wish I could say industrious) parents, and might have had a good education if he had thought

proper to receive it; for there was money enough thrown away on the occasion. But his early propensity to *a game at hurley**, hunting weasles—a very common animal in that county—and other like elegant accomplishments, so far *above* literary pursuits, that he *very properly* despised them. His debut in the fashionable world was in Dublin, where he had *tick* with a tailor, learned to drink six bottles of claret, get his word taken by a bailiff, and was so well known by the night-constable as a *gemman*, that his *honour* was never detained in

* A game common among the Irish peasantry, where a bone-setter constantly attends to mend (or rather to distort) the fractured limbs which always occur on those occasions.

the watch-house. Master of all these *fashionable* accomplishments, he started for Bond-street, where he was the gallant *gay* Lothario some fifteen or sixteen seasons ago. He acquired such a polish from his proximity to Bond-street—by which he was enabled to be always in the beau monde from three to six, as he did not live a hundred miles from *Grafton-street*—that he was perfectly master of that refined art of being impudent to every female he met, because there was an 'honourable' attached to his name.

We wrote him a letter full of the most fulsome nonsense, and put a female's name to it—how she was captivated with his fine person, and longed

to have the felicity of conversing with him, &c. &c.—and appointed a meeting: the place prescribed was near the Park wall, between Lord William Gordon's house and the small gate which leads to the park, which bounds were immediately in view of Mrs. Robinson's house. We also wrote another to a young nobleman to nearly the same purport, and a third to a dashing attorney; and the signal for each was a green ribbon and straw bonnet, and the same hour was appointed for all three.

The first that came to the scene of action was the Tipperary boy; the next the attorney, with a very sedate countenance, as if he was studying his *de-*

duration; and last of all came his lordship.

The place of appointment was prescribed within such narrow limits, that each suspected the other was watching his actions, which produced the most surly looks, and the most ridiculous efforts to get rid of each other; but they were determined not to quit the field till the last moment; and remained there, to the no small amusement of several ladies who were let into the secret, for some hours.

The society of the charming Mrs. Robinson and her accomplished daughter was so agreeable during my residence in their neighbourhood, that I often think of the happy moments we

spent together with pleasure and gratitude; for they always felt a satisfaction in anticipating my wants. Finding my health in rather a declining state, I accepted an invitation from a clergyman's lady in the country; and, during my absence, I lost my much-esteemed friend. I received a letter from her a week before her death, which was occasioned by striking her head against a beam, as her coachman lifted her up to take her out to her carriage.....Were frail mortals to consider that the slender thread that holds our existence may be divided by the slightest accident, and that almost within a second of time we may be summoned into the presence of our Creator with all our imperfections

on our head,' they would be better prepared to meet the awful moment of their dissolution.....She resigned her soul with that calmness which her great mind, and a hope in the merits of her Redeemer, that her sins, through his mercy, would be forgiven, inspired her with—lamented by all who knew her, and by none more sincerely than myself.

Somewhat revived from the country air, I returned again to London, and resided with my mother at Brompton. Coming into town one day, extremely low-spirited, I perceived a *gentleman* look at me rather steadfastly; and, as I proceeded a few steps farther, he came up and spoke to me, enquired how I

did, and how long I had been in town. I assured him, that, though his face was familiar to me, I did not recollect his name, and begged to know to whom I was indebted for such kind enquiries. He immediately waved the answer, by instantly speaking of some circumstances of my life, and my present deserted situation—a string that the slightest touch on would instantly vibrate through my heart; and, by thus engaging my feelings, he made me forget I was conversing with a stranger.

We entered Leicester-square: he seemed acquainted with most of the occurrences of my life, saying he had often dined in company with me at Mr. Topham's house, and descanting in

the most feeling manner upon the way in which I had been treated; adding, if I thought proper, he would certainly render my situation more comfortable; but as he was in a hurry, going to a party at Lord ——'s, he must wish me a good evening: he requested me to consider seriously all he had been saying, and, if at leisure, he would wish to see me the next day. He was dressed in the most fashionable style, and had the easy address and manners of a gentleman. I met him the next day, according to appointment: the conversation of the day before was again renewed; and he preyed so much upon my feelings, by often repeating my deserted situation, and the very great

pleasure it would give him to alleviate my unhappy lot, and a thousand other expressions of the like nature, that at last I thought him an angel sent from heaven to put an end to all my troubles. We walked round the square, when he said, in a softened voice, "Madam I have long admired you, and long wished for an opportunity to offer to share my fortune with you, one never having occured before. Permit me to lay myself and it at your feet."

Thunderstruck at his expressions, without answering him, I inquired, "Pray, sir, are you serious?"—"Most certainly, madam!" replied he: "but, as I have too much *honour* to deceive *any* woman, I beg leave to tell you I

am a *married* man." The last expression roused me from my lethargy, and I instantly perceived the motives for his *humanity*. I rejected his proposal with the greatest contempt, reproached him for his impertinence in the strongest language I could make use of, and was about to leave him, when he entreated I would have the politeness to hear what he had to say.

He assured me, if I would forgive his expressions, I never should hear them again from him; and, as a convincing proof of his sincerity, he begged I would allow him to have the pleasure of relieving me from my temporary embarrassments, which he was well acquainted pressed upon me at the pre-

sent period; and begged I would accept the loan of fifty pounds for that purpose. I really thought his contrition for having offended me was sincere; and that, in making me the offer, he was actuated by motives of humanity alone.

I replied, that, notwithstanding my present embarrassed situation, I could not think of accepting it unless he did me the honour to let me know to whom I was so much indebted, that I might have the satisfaction of returning it when in my power. He replied, with a great deal of sang froid, "P—." "What," said I, "Lord P—?" "No," returned he, "his brother."—From the noble and generous heart of the Hon. Mr. P.

whom I had so often heard spoken of in society, I had no hesitation in saying that I should be extremely obliged. He said he had not the money in his pocket; but if I would see him on the following evening in Leicester-square, he would let me have it. As, a few days before, I had resolved to go to Brighton, and had taken my place at the Golden-cross, Charing-cross, I told him he might see me at a certain hour in the square on my way there, where I purposed sleeping, on account of my setting out so early the next morning.

I arrived in the square at the appointed time, with my trunk in the coach, and did not wait long before he came: he wore a cocked-hat, with all

the other *paraphernalia* necessary for the opera, whither he was going; and requested me to drive on, and wait in the carriage, opposite the coach-office, till he came, as he was to call at the opera-house to get the money from Lord ——, who appointed to meet him there for the purpose. I ordered the coachman to proceed there, had my trunk delivered, and sat in the coach, happy in the idea of having money to settle my trifling debts, and remain at Brighton for about a month to re-establish my health.

Suspense is one of the most agonising torments of the human breast. The most excruciating pain, even death, are pleasures, when compared to it. I remain,

ed in the coach till the opera was over —no one came: I looked anxiously every moment for his arrival—but he did not appear. The coachman suggested to me, from the lateness of the hour, that it was very improbable the gentleman *would* come, and advised me to order a bed at the hotel. I requested him to go and do it for me; but he was informed by the waiter, in a surly tone, that all their beds were engaged, and that I should have ordered one when I sent in my trunk, which I entirely forgot, my mind being absorbed in the idea of receiving the money.

I had now no alternative but to sleep in the coach: it was already half past one o'clock; and a woman in Lon-

don, at that hour, is as unprotected as if she were in the most uncivilised country in the universe. I therefore hired the coach to remain where it was all night (as I was to set out so early in the morning, I had not a sufficiency of time to return home), for which I paid a guinea. I felt no small degree of satisfaction when I was roused to set off for Brighton. All the journey down I was endeavouring to account within myself for the strange mysterious manner in which I had been treated, as, from the very high character the brother of Lord P. bore in life—his birth, his feelings, his fortune, and the circle he moved in—all contributed to give the *veto* that he would not willingly act so; but for

the present I was unable to solve the business.

I remained at Brighton one week less than I at first intended, in consequence of paying a guinea for my *motionless* ride. Some time after my return to London, I espied the same *gentleman* in the boxes at Drury-lane. I immediately accosted him, to ask him how he dare treat me in the unhandsome manner he had done. He made several apologies, and requested whatever I had to say to him might not be mentioned there: he came out, and, after making some trifling excuse too insignificant to mention, he returned to the box again. I enquired of the box-keepers who he was; and had an aërial

spirit come down from above, and crushed the theatre into ten thousand atoms before my eyes, I could not have been more astonished than I was to hear it.—

" Rise, Alps, between us, and whole oceans roll ! "

—Shall I mention the *horrid name?*—the very recollection of it, in endeavouring to commit it to paper, has almost caused a paralysis of my fingers; my pen has fallen from my trembling hand, which nearly refuses to obey the dictates of its office:—it was ..... F——, *a tradesman* in Castle-street, Leicester-square.

I had written to the Honourable Mr. P. on the business, and received a letter from him couched in the most elegant

and gentlemanlike terms (indeed I really believe he is incapable of any other), denying any knowledge whatever of the affair I wrote to him upon; and stating that it certainly must have been some villain who had assumed his name—which turned out to be the fact.

In speaking of Mr. Hastings's trial, in a former page, I entirely forgot to notice a circumstance that occurred during that celebrated epocha. I shall mention it merely to shew that the goddess Fashion is worshipped by little minds—not as a deity, idolised for itself alone, but to ape their superiors in the great world, and which, like an expiring ember, would soon vanish but for the spirit of emulation which the wish

to appear like their betters ever excites in vulgar minds.—I attended daily when Mr. Topham was in the country; and the clerks took down the report of the trial from my memory. One day in particular, before the court commenced, I was conversing rather facetiously with those around me; a citizen's wife, more celebrated for riches than good-breeding, sat next to me: I perceived her every moment to move a little from me, tuck her clothes under her as if they would receive some infection by touching mine, and look at me with the most impertinent insolence. She at length got some distance from me on the bench; and I must confess she had, by her conduct, worked me

up to the highest pitch of anger: though I pretended to take no notice of it, I resolved to be revenged on her the first opportunity.

Her Grace the Duchess of G——, with that amiable and good-natured condescension for which she is so remarkable, and which is ever the concomitant of a great mind, did me the honour to ask me for my newspaper. The lady who had been for some time before retreating sidewise from me, like a crab, by one movement brought herself close to me, and, assuming a hypocritical grin, endeavoured to look very complacent upon me, and more than once tried to engage me in conversation; but I treated her with the most marked

contempt. I handed the paper to her grace, which she returned as soon as she had read it.

My neighbour now, conceiving it a good opportunity either to get herself taken notice of, by doing what a duchess had done, or to engage in conversation with me, turned round, and, with that forced politeness so common in vulgar life, requested me to lend the paper to her. Enraged at her former insolence, and confident she would not have noticed me had not her superior set the example, I said, loud enough to be heard by every one present, "I'd see you at the d—l first!" The eyes of every one were instantly turned to-

wards her: she sunk into her original littleness, and feigning illness (the favourite auxiliary of our sex on those occasions), I advised her to try the open air. Glad of an opportunity to get disengaged from a society where she had made herself so ridiculous, she took advantage of the hint, went out, and we were never after *honoured* with her company.

Another circumstance occurred during that trial, which the papers of the day took advantage of, and mentioned with a vast deal of unjust severity: but as I have endeavoured to preserve every critique that seemed to possess merit, whether for or against me, in the Ap-

pendix will be seen what appeared on the occasion*. I always took a bottle of lavender in my pocket; but one morning I unfortunately sat upon it and broke it. The reporters of the different papers then in the *Hall* turned it into brandy, and gave me a permit for it in their columns: but of this they may be certain, had it been brandy I should have taken more care of it!

Among the many homes which the different vicissitudes of fortune obliged me to seek, fate ordained that I should lodge at the house of a person of the name of Mariner, in Ryder-street, St. James's. —I regret that I have to mention the

* See Appendix [R].

name in my Memoirs; for the vulgar illiterate being is fond of having his name made public, even for acts that the cannibals on the coast of Guinea would blush for;—even the Mocos, the most savage tribe of that continent, pity the distresses and misfortunes of a woman!—I remained with him for some weeks, and paid him in the best manner I was able; but my bill at last unfortunately amounted to the sum which the law constitutes as a ground for arrest.....In any other country where imprisonment for debt is admitted, as we are informed *(even the very enemy of human nature, the French nation, not excepted)*, a debtor is not suffered to be sent to prison before it is per-

fectly ascertained he *owes* the money; and then they will not allow of his imprisonment unless she is able to *discharge* the debt, and they see in his conduct a something which leads them to suppose he is endeavouring to deprive the creditor of his just rights.....He pressed me very much to settle with him, which I was unable to do immediately, but assured him I would soon, when I expected some money: all my entreaties could not prevail on him to give me a short respite, or, to use the old but true proverb—"Give me time, and I will pay you all;" and one evening he assured me he would arrest me next morning if I did not settle with him. Confident that he was ruffian

enough to keep his word in *that* particular, I was afraid to go home; but where was I to go? I considered for a few minutes, and retraced in my mind the character of every person with whom I was acquainted: not one disinterested friend could I fix upon to whom I could fly for refuge. — "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests: but the son of man hath not where to lay his head." — I determined to try *one* lady, to gain an asylum for that night; and if I did not succeed, trust *to Providence (the only sincere friend I had)* for the result. I went to her lodgings, and enquired for her; but was informed by her black servant she had just gone to bed, and

she could not think of disturbing her. My unhappy and acute feelings, which have all my life been my bane, took alarm at such an answer; for could I have forgotten I had any, or been hypocrite enough to have acted contrary to their dictates, my circumstances would *now* wear a better aspect, and I might *now* have many friends: thus, not once considering it was an ignorant black servant who spoke to me, without any authority from her mistress, I instantly left the house.

These were my reflections on the occasion.—*Negroes* are the children of nature, born in a country where the unsettled will of petty despotism disregards the ties which on this earth ought to bind

as to each other (and which ought to be the more strictly adhered to, as we are but sojourners upon it); and when transplanted into the genial country of Britain, gratitude leads them to *act*, while, in their own country, they were born only to *obey*, without daring to presume an opinion of their own. She must have heard her mistress speak disrespectfully of me; and she, of course, took it for granted the line *she* was to pursue; and therefore gave me the distressing answer she did.

I left the house in the most melancholy state of mind, as the prospect before me was very gloomy. At whatever part of the perspective my situation is viewed, nothing is beheld but

misfortune:—were I to go to my lodgings, a prison stared me in the face; if I did not go, I must have the earth for my bed and the heaven for my canopy, as I had not a shilling in my pocket, nor did I know where to obtain one. I weighed both circumstances in my mind, and determined not to go home. The watchman was crying eleven o'clock when I made my resolve; and I strolled on, not knowing or caring which way I went, when I found myself in the road that leads to Highgate. I beguiled the night by walking; and next morning I found myself so fatigued and ill, that, be the consequence what it might, I was under the necessity of returning home to get a little repose. I

had not been long composed, before the *heralds of infamy* arrived, and arrested me at the suit of my landlord; and I once more entered a lock-up-house—that emporium of villany. If I could have my wish, they should be all rased to the ground, and the earth on which their foundation stood should be dug out and thrown into the sea, for fear of contaminating the neighbouring clay.

On the second day of my being arrested, I was very much surprised to receive a visit from the *Tipperary boy*. He came into the room, and, with a great degree of volubility, made numerous professions almost in a breath; urging, with the true Munster accent, that

he would settle every thing immediately, and *I must go* out instantly. When done delivering his almost incoherent oration, he approached nearer to me, and was going to behave rudely. I ran to the bell, rung it furiously, and ordered him to be shewn out of the house that moment. It was cruel to insult the feelings of a woman in misfortune; for if he had had any real wish to serve me, he would not have acted in the manner he did. But the butterflies of the day conceive that a coat made in Bond-street, and boots cleaned with *Day* and *Martin's* blacking, are a sufficient sanction for them to hurt the feelings or character of any woman they meet; and those atoms of an hour

hover round the altar of dissipation till their wings are either singed by its rays, or by a dip in the Fleet or King's-bench are rendered incapable of any longer enabling their master to buz about in the busy scenes of fashionable folly. I was enabled on the third day to gain my liberty—

"Liberty, thrice good and gracious goddess!"

"A day, an hour of virtuous liberty, is worth a whole eternity of bondage!"

As soon as I was free I returned to the same lodgings to finish the week, as it had been begun by my going there on Monday morning. He charged for it in his account, so that I was determined to see it out; and for the few

days I remained there, I *rather* think he had reason to regret his conduct to me.

—" None but myself could have sustained such sufferings; but I was instructed by Necessity, and she teaches what otherwise could never be known: those who are without misfortunes are without knowledge, they distinguish neither good nor evil, and are strangers to themselves."—

One circumstance gratitude calls on me to mention, as it has been the means of rendering me tolerably comfortable of late years; and as a good action always is its own reward, the parties to whom I am indebted in the present instance must feel it extremely pleasing

to their feelings, that what they have not missed has made a child of misfortune happy.

A gentleman with whom I was acquainted in better times—who knew the very great attention I paid to my children, and their equally great *in*attention to me— together with a female relation of his, have been very kind to me. Their assistance has been of the most essential service, while what they have done has been without ostentation or a hope of return, for which I thank them. The numerous acts of benevolence they perform do them the highest honour, as they are not conferred with the empty pomp of low-bred meanness, or to catch the en-

quiring eye of petty slander. Their house may justly be styled the temple of humanity, in which the honourable character of a British citizen will be handed down to posterity, unsullied as water from the mountain spring; and may the neighbourhood of the Royal Exchange long continue to record their worth!

I next removed to Knightsbridge, where I was taken very ill with a lowness of spirits; for the troubles of my checquered life began at last to deprive them of their elasticity; and I began to think, as well as my sister, that I was fast approaching to that "bourne from whence no traveller returns:" her attention to me was unremitting. I was

insensible to all worldly objects, and earnestly looked forward to that moment which was to free me from all earthly cares. I had many letters of Mr. Topham's in my possession; and as I did not wish them to fall into any other person's hands after my decease —for it was considered by the medical gentlemen who attended as an inevitable consequence of my malady — I wrote to him to beg he would either come for them, or let me know where I should send them for him. I received an answer from him full of thanks for my attention to a point of such moment to him, and expressing surprise how it was possible I could have preserved them during the different vicissi-

tudes which I had gone through; advising me to keep up my spirits, and assuring me that something *would* and *should* be done for me shortly—I suppose because he conceived I should not want it. He concluded by informing me he should very soon be in town, at a gentleman's house in Keppel-street, where he requested the letters might be sent.

In compliance with his wishes, I had them conveyed there; but three or four days having elapsed without my receiving any acknowledgment of their delivery, I felt so uneasy that I took a coach, and went to the house. I found Mr. Topham there: he had arrived only the evening before, and had not had

time to send an answer. I was shewn into the drawing-room, and overheard him enquiring very anxiously of the servant what the lady's name was who wished to see him—how she was dressed—and whether alone. In short, all his questions denoted *agitation* — "the guilty conscience needs no accuser!" — The servant told him it was a lady in deep mourning, who had a child with her. This seemed to relieve his mind, as by the description he did not know who it was; so he sent in word he would wait on her immediately.

At his entrance he seemed somewhat startled at my presence; but, with that easy polish so natural to him, he soon got the better of it, and thanked

me for my attention in sending the letters: he likewise repeated his assurance of doing something for me. I then requested him to pay for the suit of mourning which I wore, as it was for my daughter, and as his own draper, Mr. Rodwell, had in the kindest manner let me have it, certain that he would not object to defray the expense on such an occasion. He put on a face and nodded just like Lord Burleigh in The Critic, but said nothing; I conceived it a nod of assent: therefore it cannot be said that he broke his *word* if he has not paid for them, which I dare not enquire about, as I have been ashamed to see Mr. Rodwell ever since, never having it in my power to answer

the trifling demand. I next told him I was very short of money, and requested he would do me the favour to pay for my coach, as my illness had deprived me of the little I had. He put his hand into his pocket, with some exertion extracted a dollar from it — which, like Hotspur's fop, he held "'twixt his finger and his thumb" — and handed it to me with a smile of satisfaction on his countenance at the idea of making such a sacrifice for *me!* My heart filled at the sight; my hand, in an involuntary manner, advanced to receive it, which it did without being conscious of the action. I left the house, determined to keep it as a sacred relic; and had engraved upon it—*This*

was given to me by the man to whom I bore four children! What more could he give me than a *crown?* I intend it for my grand-children, as it is now all the fortune I have to leave them. But, unfortunately for Mr. Topham, I did not die, as was expected; my health is so far established as to enable me to commit the circumstance to paper.

Among my numerous acquaintance, I had the honour of ranking the eccentric Mrs. Inchbald. Our intimacy commenced immediately after my engagement at the Haymarket, where she was retained to play those parts that no person cared whether they were well or ill performed, and was al-

most like "a cypher in the great account;" but the manner in which she first came into public notice is rather singular, and plainly shews that if a comet is ordained to consume the world, however long it may remain unseen and unnoticed, that, when least expected, it will shine forth with additional lustre. Her fine figure and beautiful face procured her a salary of five-and-twenty shillings per week: but to attain perfection as an actress was not her object; her motive was to learn,

—"and catch the manners living as they rise."

She presented Mr. Colman with a farce called The Mogul Tale, which she told him was written by a lady, a friend

of hers. If it had merit, she wished it to be brought out—if not, she requested it might be immediately returned. He soon perceived its worth; and it was accordingly given among the performers to study. What surprised us all,—at the rehearsal Mrs. Inchbald seemed in great agitation, and corrected me in some of the passages which I did not speak to please her; which was by no means agreeable to me at the time, for I then conceived her very inadequate to the task. The piece was received with great applause: at its conclusion she came into the green-room, and begged us to wish her joy! Her former mysterious conduct, and her present very great appearance of

joy, led us to suppose she had an affection of the brain, and that this was only a paroxysm. Mr. Parsons asked her what he was to wish her joy for:—was it some great aunt who had died, and left her a large fortune? or was she about to be *married?* or had she captivated the heart of some dear swain? She turned round to him, and replied, "No, sir, it is none of the circumstances you mention, but what I prize far more—*I* am the authoress of the farce you have just played; and I must confess I am very happy at its success." We were all very much astonished, as we never considered her abilities to reach mediocrity: but her elegant literary productions since, which

might have been for ever lost to the world but for the manner she thus adopted to bring forth the farce, justify the idea—

" Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
" And waste its fragrance in the desert air."

I formerly had the pleasure of being very intimate with her; and in her play of Lovers' Vows she alludes to my children, where Frederick says to his mother, " Cursed be that child who could find his mother guilty, though all the world should call her so!"

But when I returned from Gretford, nothing could persuade her but that I was actually mad; and on no account would she see me: " And," said she to

a lady, "if she has been mad, she must have had her head shaved!" I have been often at a loss to conjecture whether it was an effort—like all the rest of the world, when an acquaintance becomes either troublesome or poor—to get rid of me, or that her delicate nerves could not possibly bear the shock. I have ever found her, during our acquaintance, consistent towards me, and ever had for her the most sincere respect, which remains undiminished. On our first acquaintance, she did me the pleasure of visiting me at Mr. Topham's; and one day, going into the city in a carriage, accompanied by her and a young gentleman, we stopped at a confectioner's to get some

pastry, which I paid for; and we were going away, when Mrs Inchbald insisted upon treating the boy to a penny cake! She pulled her money out of her pocket, put it in her lap, and took from it a penny to pay for the cake: and I think this trifling anecdote is a sufficient proof of the absence of *great* minds, for she never returned the rest into her pocket, and it fell among the straw in the Hackney-coach. Some short time after she left our house she again returned, in a most distressing state of mind at the loss of her whole week's salary, and made a most piteous lamentation for such a trifle; but so great was her sense of honour in discharging her debts, that she could not bear

the idea of getting any credit for the ensuing week. Thus has that woman, who has both astonished and instructed the world by her elegant writings, been more distressed at such a bagatelle than ever she found pleasure in the success of her best piece; and at that very time she was either laying the foundation, or had in embryo, the outlines of the beautiful works she has since produced.

When she was at the theatre, at such a low salary, she conducted herself with so much propriety that even the very scene-shifters and dependents about it treated her with the most marked respect; and every person then declared there was a something in her

which they found it impossible to ascertain: but her pen has since accounted most amply for it.

I played Julia, in her farce of The Midnight Hour; and the elegant compliment she did me the honour of paying will be seen by the following letter: —

" Dear Madam,

" You pleased me so much at the second representation of Julia, that had you played as well the first night, I certainly should have dedicated the farce to you.

" I remain,

" dear Madam,

" yours, with esteem,

" E. INCHBALD."

" *Castle-street,*

Wednesday morning."

" MRS. WELLS."

So handsome a compliment from such a lady as Mrs. Inchbald was a great gratification to me; and I have consecrated the many letters I have received from her as a peace-offering at the shrine of gratitude, to appease the manes of our former friendship.—

" Friendship, like love, is but a name—
" A charm that lulls to sleep—
" A shade that follows wealth and fame,
" And leaves the wretch to weep."

The part of Jane Shore, which I played at the Haymarket, was my last theatrical essay, though not my last theatrical effort; and it is now one of my greatest and only consolations to see a play. Mr. Sheridan very politely gave me the freedom of Drury-lane for my-

self and friend, before it was burnt down; but, from the small size of the Lyceum, I could not in reason ask it to be continued. Mr. Colman is polite enough to give me nightly admissions for the Haymarket; and Mr. Harris, when I was Mrs. Wells, gave me the freedom of Covent-garden; but when John Kemble assumed the reins of government, my name was struck off the list. How different from his conduct when manager of Drury-lane (but in that house he had no interest), when he put my sister, her husband, and a Mr. Bonner, on the free-list to oblige me and Mr. Topham!.....but then comedy was to be puffed, now it is not wanted. The following letter from Mr. Kemble

to Mr. Topham will explain the circumstance; and it is but justice due to Mr. T. to let the world know his opinion on the occasion.

"*Theatre Royal, Drury lane.*

"Dear Sir,

"I HAVE taken the liberty to put Mr. and Mrs. Samuel, and Mr. Bonner, on the free-list; and hope you will have the goodness to give orders to your people to speak favourably of the *Charles**, as more depends on that than you can possibly be aware of.

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Your very humble servant,

"J. P. KEMBLE."

"*E. Topham, Esq.*
Weymouth-street,
Portland-place."

---

* Charles, in The School for Scandal, which

I wrote to Mr. Topham, then in Suffolk, mentioning Mr. Kemble's wish, and his *liberality*, at the expense of Mr. Sheridan and the proprietors of Drury-lane theatre. Mr. T. sent me the following answer:—

"*Cowslip-hall, Suffolk.*

"Dear Pud,

"I RECEIVED your letter where you mention Kemble's wish to be puffed in *Charles*. You may inform Mr. Este*, from me,

---

Mr. Kemble had the presumption to attempt to perform.

* The editor of The World at the time, and the enthusiastic supporter of John Kemble, who, by every means a pen and a newspaper could afford, strained every sinew to fix him on the throne—not of *Denmark*, but—of *Drury-lane*.

I will not sacrifice the credit of my paper for all the admissions in Europe, to puff either the Siddonses or Kembles in comedy.

"Yours, as ever,

"E. TOPHAM."

"MRS. WELLS."

If he can feel any satisfaction in shutting the doors of Covent-garden against an old servant of the public—if he can feel any gratification in depriving me of seeing himself and sister (the greatest ornaments of the British stage) perform—his end is completely answered. I declare, nevertheless, I would walk any day as far as my strength would allow me to see either Mrs. Siddons or John Kemble in any of their dramatic characters.—I should also have added, the

unassuming Mr. Charles Kemble; for his modesty and diffidence have raised him as high in private life, as his elegant and chaste acting have in public. The *unhappy* sons of Thespis want no other recommendation to him, than that they are unfortunate and need his assistance. — Upon my reasoning with John on his unhandsome treatment, he advised me to write to the proprietors to put me on the freedom, which I did; but, from *his interest* in my behalf, I was refused *.

Many of the proprietors of the different places of amusement in the metropolis very kindly give me admissions when-

† See Appendix [S].

over I apply—Mr. Astley, Mr. Dibdin, &c. &c. But a circumstance occurred to me once, which the speaking of free admissions into a theatre brings fresh into my memory.—I was led by curiosity to see the shows at Bartholomew-fair: I went into one where there was some tumbling to be performed: one of the *actor-men* * perceiving me, recognised me to be the Mrs. Wells, late of Covent-garden, came over to me, and said, 'I hope, madam, you have not paid any thing at the door, as we never take any money from *one of us.*' Upon my saying I certainly had paid, he insisted on my money being

* In the Country Girl.

returned; and, to prevent giving offence to this good-natured man, I was obliged to comply.

I wish I could say as much for Mr. Elliston's politeness. When the play of The Dramatist was to be performed for his benefit, I waited on him for a ticket, for which he received the money, and that, too, from a woman on the theatrical fund! Performers of the new school must either be very much *degenerated*, or greatly *superior*, to what they were in my time: there certainly is a material difference, but what it is I cannot say. I wish Mr. Elliston had copied the generous conduct of the man at the fair, as the money he received for the ticket put me *that* day to a

great inconvenience; and he ought to have recollected I had trodden those boards as well as himself, and that, however good his performing may be, he is only the meteor of a moment, that may be instantaneously obliterated by that dreadful thunder-cloud — popular disapprobation!

In the short conversation I had with him, he spoke of the play of The Dramatist, and said he recollected my playing Marian in it when it first came out, and that the public were indebted to me for its being. I told him I thought he was too young to remember such a circumstance. "Indeed, madam," said he, "I am much older than you imagine, for I was at its first

performance."—I admit his age, but cannot his disinterestedness.

Among the many circumstances which a foreigner of any distinction finds disagreeable to his feelings, there are none which affect him more than the critiques in the different papers; and a person unacquainted with the manners and customs of this country is astonished to find, that the more he is exasperated, the more severe they become.—After my marriage with Mr. Sumbel, the different papers of the day were full of paragraphs respecting him, which enraged him much; but none pressed so heavily upon his feelings as The Times*. Finding it impossible, by

* See Appendix [T].

any means he could devise, to silence (what honest John conceives his birth-right) the liberty of the press, he *condescended* to ask me what method he should adopt to prevent his name being so roughly handled. I recommended him to find out the editor, and make his peace with him.

One day I accidentally met with a person of the name of Finney, who officiated in the capacity of editor to The Times, and desired him to call upon Mr. Sumbel, as he wanted to speak with him. A few days after, he came, and Mr. Sumbel requested he would not annoy him any more in his paper. Mr. Finney, who was of the true *Milesian* breed, said he would use all his

interest, if Mr. S. would give some money among the men to drink: to that he assented, and pulling out from his escritoire a large parcel of notes, he handed him over a few, saying to him, 'Will that be enough?'—'Oh,' said Mr. Finney (winking at me at the same time, as much as to say—Hold your tongue), 'my dear honey, give me a few more, and, by St. Patrick, I'll knock out the brains of any one in our office who dare even *whisper* your name!'—He left our house very well satisfied with the interview; but, to our astonishment, The Times was as *bad* as ever to *us*. We could not conceive what the reason could be, as Mr. Sumbel had behaved so very liberally to Mr.

Finney; but, upon enquiry, we ascertained that he dropped down dead after leaving our house!

Whilst *The World* was in being, the house in which Mr. Topham and I resided, in Beaufort-buildings, was the constant resort of men of high literary character; and, among the number, we had the pleasure of reckoning Miles Peter Andrews, Esq. who had been the friend of Mr. Topham from his youth. He may be justly ranked among the first of poets and men of genius and li-

terature; but all his learning and accomplishments have never enabled him to mend his temper, which is almost as inflammable as his mills at Dartford *, and to be exceeded by none in the kingdom but *my own*. I should not have introduced his name in these pages, it being somewhat extraneous to my subject, but to mention a circumstance that I heard from himself; which, as I ever knew him to be a man of veracity and strict honour, I have every reason to believe true; and as it explains some circumstances respecting the death of the late Lord Lyttleton

* He owns the famous powder-mills there, so celebrated over the world for good gunpowder.

(Mr. Andrews's intimate companion for several years) never before made known to the public, it may not be uninteresting to my readers.

A few nights previous to Lord Lyttleton's demise (as mentioned in his biography attached to his poems), soon after he had got into bed he saw a female at the foot of it, with a dove in her hand, and beautifully arrayed in white, who told him, in a very impressive manner, to prepare himself for death, as the third night from that, exactly at twelve o'clock, he should depart this life! His lordship, who had ever led a very gay one, conceiving it was some female who had got into his room, and had said so merely to jest

with him, jumped out of bed; but, to his astonishment, found the door fast, and no person in the room except his valet, who was fast asleep in a recess, where he always lay. Greatly alarmed at the circumstance, it made a deep impression upon him, and he determined to put off a visit he was to have paid Mr. Andrews that very week; and the night which the spectre prescribed as his last, was the very one he was expected to sleep at Dartford. On the fatal evening his lordship had several of his friends about him, who amused themselves with looking at the family pictures till the hour of twelve o'clock arrived. As some of them regarded it a phantom of his lordship's brain,

they privately put the clock forward a few minutes. As soon as it struck, he turned round to all who were about him, and said, "You see, I have cheated the ghost!" Upon which he went up to bed, and his valet brought him some trifling medicine to take, but had forgotten a spoon to stir it: he sent him down for one; and, on his return, found him actually a corpse on the bed! He looked at his lordship's fine stop-watch, and found the hands exactly at the stroke of twelve o'clock.

Mr. Andrews finding his lordship did not come down on the day he promised, which was the very one on which he died, could not imagine the reason of it, and had retired to rest

somewhat before twelve. He had not been long lying down when the curtains at the foot of the bed were drawn open, and he saw his lordship standing before him, in a large figured morning-gown which always remained in the house for his lordship's sole use. Mr. Andrews conceiving that his lordship had arrived after he had retired, as he so positively expected him on that day, said to him, "My lord, you are at some of your tricks; go to your bed, or I will throw something at you." The answer he returned was—"*It is all over with me, Andrews!*" and instantly disappeared. As there was a large clothes-press at the foot of the bed, he conceived his lordship had got into it, and rose to see;

but he did not find him there. He next examined the night-bolt on the door, and found it fast; and he saw by the candle he had not been long in bed, or he might otherwise have conceived it a dream. He rung his bell, and enquired of his servants where Lord Lyttleton was; they said they had not seen him. The night-gown was next sought for, and found in its usual place. Mr. Andrews knew not of his lordship's death till next day, when letters from London announced it to have taken place exactly at twelve o'clock the night before. As must naturally be supposed, the circumstance and the loss of his friend made a very great impression upon Mr. Andrews, and affected him for

some months after, as he is positive to his being awake at the time it happened, and of the appearance of the phantom.

Upon taking an impartial view of the business:—The circumstances connected with Lord Lyttleton's death are on record, well authenticated by people of honour, veracity, and high rank; and that he died at the exact hour of twelve is beyond a doubt. With respect to Mr. Andrews, he is a man of a strong mind, stored with the most elegant accomplishments which literature, a refined education, and a good understanding, could give it; his character as a man of honour and of truth has never been impeached; while his

ample fortune has placed him above the petty cavils or petty necessities of checquered life: therefore, under such circumstances, we can have no reason to suspect Mr. Andrews of telling any thing but what he really saw. But this I solemnly protest: he mentioned the occurrence to me at his *own* table, in his *own* house, and in the presence of Mr. Topham.

Whether Lord Lyttleton's death is to be attributed to a divine source or not I cannot pretend to determine; but many people suppose, as he was found with his watch in his hand after his death, and by it, it was exactly twelve, the *idea* of the time not being past which was ordained to finish his

existence gave him such a shock as to cause his immediate death from the fright.

As Wales is remarkable for the number of people who retire there to live on a slender income, I thought *mine* would be a match for any of them in that point; so I determined to go there and end my days among the hills and mountains of that romantic country. I accordingly set out in a stage-coach for the neighbourhood of Bangor, where I had been some years before; and took up my residence in a neat but humble cottage, the walls of which were covered with the paper that contained a list of

the pedigree of its owners. Our family consisted of a farmer, his wife, and two daughters. I paid thirty-five pounds a year for my board, was very much reconciled to their mode of living, and never expected again to mix in the busy scenes of the metropolis: I thought I had bid London adieu for ever; but I can truly say there is no certainty in this life, and we should never make up our mind to any fixed abode, since I was obliged to leave that place: but the fate of the unfortunate family made me alter my resolution once more.—The eldest daughter was a lovely girl of eighteen years of age; the youngest was not quite so handsome, but possessed an agreeable vivacity which endeared her to all her acquaint-

ance, and was a year younger than her sister: they both had received a tolerable education, and were neither of them devoid of sense. The accomplished son of a gentleman of easy fortune in the neighbourhood was frequent in his visits to our little cottage; and, as his father was the landlord of it, he was always received with a welcome. He paid the most marked attention to Emily, the eldest, and seemed to treat Ellen with the greatest indifference, or at least with no more than the common forms of politeness required. The father and mother of the girls consulted me on the occasion, and I strenuously advised them either to demand an explanation from him, or

to put an end to his visits altogether. His constant attendance at our cottage, and his affection for Emily, at length became the conversation of the neighbourhood, and last of all reached his father's ears. Very much enraged to find his son so likely to degrade him by the alliance, he sent for the father of the girl, whom he menaced in the most severe manner for encouraging his son to go so often to his house, declaring if he allowed him to marry his daughter, he would turn him out of doors, and deprive him of every thing that lay in his power; and that he (the farmer) should quit the cottage. The old man came home and told us the nature of the interview he had had with the young

gentleman's father, with a request to his daughter to think no more of him. However, the son contrived to write to her; and at length prevailed on her to give him her hand privately, which she, in an unlucky moment, consented to, although she had no very great affection for him. They had not been long married before his father kept his word with him; and the consequence was, his immediate removal to join our society. All this time Ellen seemed to look upon what was going forward with indifference; but there was an unhappy passion rankling in her bosom; for, from the first moment she saw the gentleman who was now her sister's husband, she loved him to distraction,

though she never gave one of us the least reason to suppose such a circumstance: the frequent opportunities they had of being together fanned the flame, and she fell a victim to his villany and her attachment. It was first discovered by her pregnancy; and Emily, the elder sister, heard of it when she was very near her time, which brought on premature labour, and she died three days after, regretted by every one who knew her amiable disposition and good conduct. Her unhappy father survived his beloved daughter but one week: her mother took both their deaths so much to heart, that she resigned her breath fourteen days after them both!

I determined to quit a place which

had been nothing but a scene of mourning since my arrival—from the villany of a young man and the imprudence of his father, in not adopting a different plan after he knew an attachment had taken place between them—and set out for London: and I have since learned that they lived together for some time; when the father, ashamed of his son's baseness, turned them both from the cottage. He shortly after deserted her, and is become a wanderer about the country, despised by all who knew him; and she has been the companion of a serjeant of dragoons who was recruiting in the neighbourhood.

The destruction she brought upon her family, and the climax in her own

fate, is a proof that, sooner or later, a just Providence will punish vice. There is not one circumstance in her favour: the person with whom she formed an attachment she knew to be a married man; had he been single, it might have been a small alleviation of her conduct. One moment's consideration might have prevented her tasting the bitter draught of misery: my sex are so deceived when they first put it to their lips, that they conceive it to be sweet as ambrosia; but, as they drink deeper, the taste changes, and, by the addition of (what *always* occurs on those occasions) *neglect*, it at length turns into gall: and self-reproach will not palliate, much less alter, the wretched owner of a

guilty mind. As to the gentleman, there can be no excuse whatever on his side: he was a man who knew better—he knew good from evil—he had received a liberal education, and must have been aware that the Almighty would punish his crimes:—it is even reported that he gave his wife some medicine to destroy the infant in her womb. What can that man expect who thus adds the crime of murder to that of incest? His mind must be debased beyond that of the veriest wretch, as he certainly formed the connection after he removed to her father's house.

There is no punishment, in my opinion, which the infernal deities, in their researches to find new torments to

chastise their disciples with, can inflict, that will be half severe enough for such a man. Parents should also consider, that, when an attachment is once irrevocably fixed, harsh means will never have any effect; and, by making use of them, the result is diametrically opposite to what was intended: it would always be better in those cases rather to palliate than to enforce.

.....

I have experienced many friendly acts since my misfortunes; — some have originated in ostentation, some in

ambition, and some in humanity; but, as there is no novelty in them, I shall omit them, as they would all be a repetition of the same story: yet, as I have ever acknowledged with gratitude the kindness of my friends, I must not leave out the disinterested, goodnatured, unassuming, and honest Michael Kelly. The first of my acquaintance with him arose some years back at Worcester, when he and the late Mrs. Crouch sung at the music-meeting there: the stewards, hearing I was in the town, sent and requested me to give my imitations, which I complied with; and they very politely sent me a set of china, to London, as a present. Mr. Kelly may be justly ranked, in his line, among the

first in Europe; and it is rather strange, or rather a deviation from the usual custom of men of such great abilities, that in *his composition* there is not to be found one atom of pride—I mean assumed pride; for I am confident he possesses sufficient to prevent him from ever doing an action that would bring a blush in his face, or that of his friends. From the time my misfortunes pressed upon me to this day, I have always found him the same: in the most kind manner has he treated me;—his table, when I had not one of my own, has been always open to me; and the little comforts which he knew I had formerly been used to, and which he was aware distress had deprived me of, he in a

friendly manner asked me to participate of at the Saloon, and did it with that *real* hospitality which is the distinguishing characteristic of his country.

One day, as John Kemble and I were quarrelling in King-street, Covent-garden, about the freedom of the theatre, Mr. Kelly rode up, and requested to be permitted to interpose between us; saying, 'Have not I power to reconcile you both?' Mr. Kemble immediately turned round, and replied, 'Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast!' but I instantly exclaimed, 'John, yours is too far gone; for it is beyond the power of music!'

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